United Nations E/ICEF/2017/16

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
13 July 2017

Original: English

For information

United Nations Children's Fund
Executive Board
Second regular session 2017
12-15 September 2017
Item 6 of the provisional agenda

UNICEF Gender Action Plan, 2018-2021

17-12128 (E) 090817

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I. Introduction

A. UNICEF commitment to and mandate on gender equality

1. The Gender Action Plan (GAP) 2018-2021 specifies how UNICEF will promote gender equality across the organization's work, in alignment with the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018-2021. It elaborates the gender dimensions of the programmatic results across the five goal areas of the Strategic Plan, as well as the steps to strengthen gender across change strategies and institutional systems and processes.

2. UNICEF work on gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women is grounded in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and is anchored in the landmark Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Advancing gender equality and the rights of women and girls is essential to realizing the rights of all children. Children's rights and well-being often depend on women's rights and well-being, and childhood investments in gender equality contribute to lifelong positive outcomes for children and their communities.

3. The GAP is the UNICEF road map during 2018-2021 for supporting the achievement of gender equality goals in conjunction with partners and national stakeholders, as outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals. It articulates the organizational emphasis on equity as it relates to gender-based inequalities, especially as the deprivations women and girls face increase multifold when they are also disadvantaged by poverty, ethnic identity, geographic location, disability, and/or fragile and crisis conditions. UNICEF builds on the learning from implementing the GAP 2014-2017 at the global, regional and country levels, sustaining and strengthening the most effective elements, while also making adjustments to address gaps and challenges.

B. Global context: opportunities and challenges

4. Gender equality means that women and men and girls and boys enjoy the same rights, resources, opportunities and protections. Because power structures in societies across the world mostly privilege boys and men, advancing gender equality most often requires addressing disadvantages faced by girls and women. At the same time, gender inequality pervades personal, family and social relationships and institutions, and affects not only women and girls, but also men and boys, and requires the engagement of both sexes to make progress towards justice and equality. Shifts in gender equality require not only awareness and behaviour change, but also changes in the fundamental power dynamics that define gender norms and relationships.

5. While progress was made on gender equality following the Beijing Platform for Action and under the Millennium Development Goals, women and girls continue to face disadvantages in many spheres — including health, education, political participation and economic opportunity — in all parts of the world. Moreover, even as there has been movement towards more equitable roles for men and women in many societies, in others gender norms and power differentials have become more intensified.

6. Over 300,000 women and girls per year still continue to die from complications in pregnancy and childbirth. Fifteen million girls are married each year, and 61 million are out of school at the primary and lower-secondary levels due

to poverty, gender norms and lack of services and viable alternatives. Worldwide, women and girls continue to bear the bulk of the responsibility for unpaid care work. In all societies, and especially in humanitarian situations, women and girls are at risk of gender-based violence (GBV). Associations of violence with masculinity place large numbers of boys at risk of harm, while millions grow up internalizing and perpetuating the culture of violence in family, social and political life.

7. In recognition of these challenges and the importance of addressing persistent gender-based inequalities to make overall global progress, the Sustainable Development Goals feature gender equality prominently, both as a stand-alone goal (Goal 5), and in targets across all other 16 Goals. A growing range of governments, private sector entities, and civil society actors recognize that progress cannot be achieved if half of humanity is left behind. Many no longer ask why gender equality is important, but rather what they can do to support its achievement.

II. The Gender Action Plan: from 2014-2017 to 2018-2021

8. The GAP 2018-2021 has been developed concurrently with the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, through a process of mutual strengthening. The Strategic Plan integrates gender equality in results across all five goal areas, with relevance to both development and humanitarian contexts. It also integrates gender in the programme strategies and the underlying systems and processes that enable the achievement of results.

A. Lessons learned under GAP 2014-2017

9. UNICEF has made progress in mainstreaming gender, even as challenges remain and successful efforts need to be further strengthened. An important contributor to progress has been the marked visibility of gender in the UNICEF Strategic Plan, accompanied by management's commitment to providing resources, leadership and accountability. The role of the executive-level GAP Steering Committee in providing oversight and guidance has been especially important.

10. The four targeted priorities in GAP brought attention to the intense and interlinked forms of gender inequality faced by adolescent girls, helping UNICEF and partners to catalyse global and local investment and action on issues such as child marriage and girls' secondary education. Targeted priorities also deepened country-level analysis and ownership of gender results. Progress on some targeted priorities, however, has been slower than for others, with UNICEF programming on gender-responsive adolescent health requiring greater specification in order to translate the growing global commitments into results.

11. As recent assessments show, the practical application of gender mainstreaming in UNICEF work needs further delineation. Tools and guidance such as the Gender Programmatic Review have provided a methodology for gender analysis that makes concepts more concrete for field-based staff. These tools need to support a broader range of countries, even as they undergo refinement.

12. The pathways for the engagement of boys and men need to be better articulated within UNICEF programme priorities, as do those for advancing UNICEF work on gender equality and children's rights in fragile and humanitarian contexts.

13. The focus on having robust data and evidence on gender equality is recognized by staff as one of the areas where the GAP has added the most value, increasing

both the credibility of and demand for sex-disaggregated data, and motivating the demand for gender data beyond disaggregation alone.

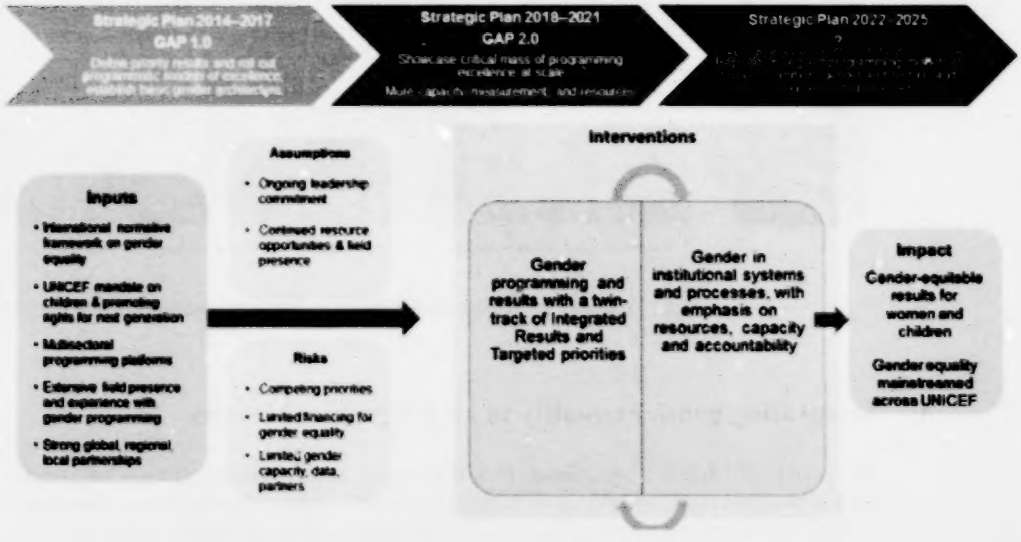
14. The most critical contributor to progress under GAP has been the investment in senior-level gender expertise. Senior gender staff, especially in regions, have been essential to improving the quality and scope of gender programming, building gender capacity, establishing internal and external gender networks and partnerships, fostering learning, knowledge-sharing, communications and advocacy, and supporting more effective measurement and accountability. Adequate gender expertise at the country level and within sectors at all levels of the organization, however, remains a challenge that will be a priority under GAP 2018-2021.

B. GAP Theory of Change

15. UNICEF advances gender mainstreaming, as envisioned in the Beijing Platform of Action, as both a bottom-up and top-down endeavour. The power of a decentralized organization like UNICEF can best be tapped by fostering field-level models of good gender programming through targeted and integrated efforts. These eventually accumulate to become a critical mass that triggers shifts in organizational systems and processes. At the same time, top-down efforts in the form of steady leadership commitment, investment of resources, capacity development, and articulation of accountabilities are also important for direction, consistency and legitimacy.

16. As shown in Figure 1, below, UNICEF mainstreaming strategy includes integration of gender in both programmatic results and institutional systems and processes. The GAP programmatic framework defines a twin-track approach: (a) integration of gender equality outcomes across all programme areas, and (b) specification of "targeted gender priorities" focused on empowering adolescent girls.

Figure 1: Gender Action Plan: Theory of Change


Strategic Plan 2014–2017
GAP 1.0
Strategic Plan 2018–2021
GAP 2.0
Showcase critical mass of programming excellence at scale
Strategic Plan 2022 - 2025
Inputs
• International normative framework on gender equality
• UNICEF mandate on children & promoting rights for next generation
• Multisectoral programming platforms
• Extensive field presence and experience with gender programming
• Strong global, regional, local partnerships
Assumptions
• Ongoing leadership commitment
• Continued resource opportunities & field presence
Risks
• Competing priorities
• Limited financing for gender equality
• Limited gender capacity, data, partners
Interventions
Gender programming and results with a twin-track of Integrated Results and Targeted priorities
Gender in institutional systems and processes, with emphasis on resources, capacity and accountability
Impact
Gender-equitable results for women and children
Gender equality mainstreamed across UNICEF

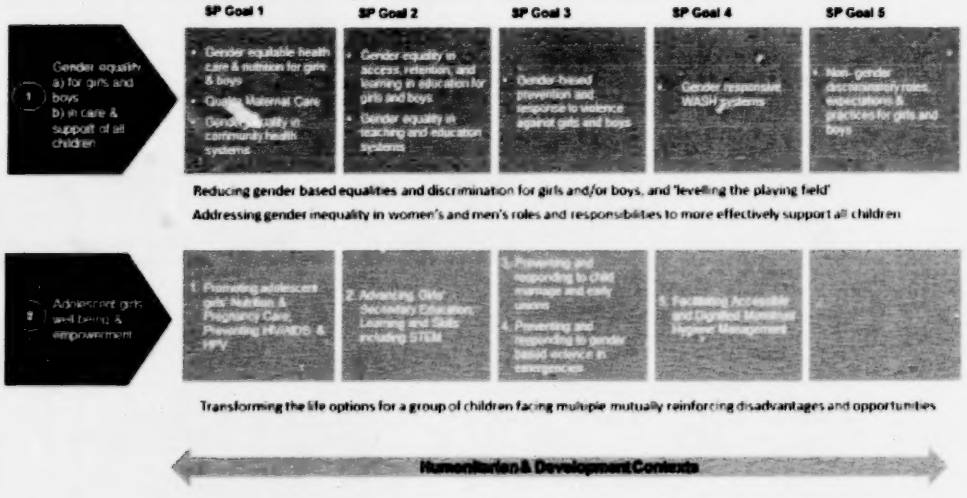
17. The vision for the first phase of GAP has been to establish a basic gender architecture of staffing and capacity, and define a set of priority programming results accompanied by strengthening of systems and resources for implementation and measurement. In some programmatic areas, field-based models of excellence have already taken shape; in other areas, the understanding of gender dimensions is clearer, and successful programmatic responses already under way are being better documented and replicated.

18. With GAP 2018-2021, the task is twofold. First, accelerate gender programming so that it covers a broader range of issues and contexts, producing not only greater depth and breadth of gender-equitable results, but also delivering them at scale. Second, intensify gender integration in institutional systems and processes by expanding gender capacity and expertise; strengthening gender analysis, data and tools; documenting and sharing best practices; and bolstering the allocation and utilization of resources.

III. Gender in programmatic results

19. In the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, gender equality is integrated into all five goal areas. Results for both programmatic tracks — integrating gender equality in all programme areas and the five targeted priorities on empowering adolescent girls — are mapped in Figure 2 against the goal areas of the Strategic Plan.

Figure 2: Gender Results in the Strategic Plan, 2018-2021


SP Goal 1
SP Goal 2
SP Goal 3
SP Goal 4
SP Goal 5
Gender equality a) for girls and boys b) in care & support of all children
Reducing gender based equalities and discrimination for girls and/or boys, and 'levelling the playing field'
Addressing gender inequality in women's and men's roles and responsibilities to more effectively support all children
Adolescent girls well-being & empowerment
Transforming the life options for a group of children facing multiple mutually reinforcing disadvantages and opportunities
Humanitarian & Development Contexts

A. Integrating gender equality in all programme results

20. GAP 2018-2021 articulates two themes to make the integration of gender within programmatic results more tangible and actionable. These themes are central to UNICEF work and reflect the gender-related priorities of many of the countries and regions where UNICEF works.

21. The first theme focuses on equality between girls and boys; the second on gender equality in care and support for children. Within these themes, eight results are specified as demonstration models for integrating gender into all programming. These eight 'demonstration' results are embedded in the Strategic Plan, with indicators in the Results Framework.

Gender equality for girls and boys

22. The first theme provides the pathway for promoting equality for girls and boys from birth through adolescence by addressing the gender-specific discrimination and disadvantages that generally affect girls, but also boys. The theme guides analysis and solutions around the nature and extent of gender inequality in key life outcomes for girls and boys in health and nutrition, education, and protection against violence and exploitation. It also helps to address gender-differentiated roles, responsibilities and socialization at various stages of childhood.

23. Four demonstration results are highlighted:

(a) Gender-equitable health care and nutrition for girls and boys;

(b) Gender equality in access, retention and learning for girls and boys;

(c) Gender-based prevention of and response to violence against girls and boys;

(d) Non-gender-discriminatory roles, expectations, and practices for girls and boys.

Gender equality in care and support for all children

24. The second theme addresses the support that all children — irrespective of age or sex — require from women in particular, but also from men, to survive and thrive. The theme emphasizes the close link between care for women and care for children in health, nutrition, learning and protection. The link between violence against women and against children is well established, and these connections are especially visible in fragile and humanitarian contexts.

25. Care and support for children can be significantly improved by fostering gender equality among women and men, by engaging men — especially fathers — and by simultaneously improving support for women and children in the family, community and other key social service areas with which UNICEF engages, such as health, education, protection, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH).

26. Four demonstration results are highlighted:

(a) Quality maternal care;

(b) Gender equality in community health systems;

(c) Gender equality in teaching and education systems;

(d) Gender-responsive WASH systems.

27. Further elaboration of the eight demonstration model results is provided in annex 1. As outlined below, UNICEF will tap the most effective, evidence-based strategies to support national and local efforts to advance gender equality and children's rights at the family, community and institutional levels in pursuit of these results, as well as others that countries may identify.

28. Strengthening local and national systems in health, education, WASH, and social and child protection to be gender-responsive is key. Interventions for systems-strengthening include technical and strategic inputs to gender-related

policies, action plans, analysis of budgets and financing in conjunction with gender budgeting, improved data and monitoring systems, as well as enhancing the gender capacity of administrators and service providers. For example, a focus on gender equality in strengthening health systems should help not only to improve maternal and newborn health, but also to build a quality health workforce that advances women as professionals.

29. Community engagement, a traditional strength of UNICEF, will be mobilized to address gender attitudes, behaviours and norms and help male and female community members to become catalysts of gender-equitable social change. For example, in its efforts to shift traditional roles, responsibilities and norms that constrain girls or boys, UNICEF and partners will work with community leaders, teachers, health workers, parents and girls and boys themselves, including through direct messaging and dialogue, mass media, social media and U-Report.

30. Evidence-based communication and advocacy for legislative and policy shifts, and especially for increased domestic financing, are important for advancing gender equality and children's well-being and rights. For example, UNICEF is supporting both research and advocacy that helps governments and stakeholders to address the close connection between child marriage and early pregnancies, lack of education for girls, child survival rates and stunting.

31. For gender programming to have reach and impact, viable solutions must be owned by local governments and partners for scale and sustainability over time. Instead of "projectizing" gender-responsive interventions, UNICEF offices will consider options for scale-up and sustainability from the very beginning of programme design — including by integrating interventions into existing systems and tapping partners with large reach.

32. Innovation in gender programming is capturing the imagination of an increasing number of UNICEF staff who are exploring new products, delivery mechanisms, and data-generation opportunities to overcome some of the most stubborn gender challenges. UNICEF will use its convening power to support innovative strategies, domestic financing, and local capacity to achieve gender-equitable results. For example, in humanitarian contexts, UNICEF will pilot data technologies to map GBV risks, collect feedback on services, and facilitate the participation and decision-making of women and girls in services and systems affecting their lives.

B. Adolescent girls' well-being and empowerment: five targeted priorities

33. In many places, a girl reaching puberty is a signal for constraining her movements, schooling, friendships, sexuality, and life exposure, while the opposite is often true for boys. Simultaneously, adolescent girls also experience the burden of domestic work, the expectation to be married or sexually active, and the likelihood of pregnancy, along with the experience of sexual and other types of violence. Because of these obstacles, millions of adolescent girls across the world are denied their potential.

34. The five targeted priorities place a special focus on this group of children — disadvantaged adolescent girls — for whom investment in multiple interlinked areas has the potential to bring about transformative change, with continuing multiplier effects for their families, communities, and especially the next generation. Within the UNICEF mandate on advancing the rights of children, girls facing an intensification of deprivations as they become adolescents are both a special

responsibility and opportunity for change. The five targeted priorities below span goals 1, 2, 3 and 4 in the UNICEF Strategic Plan, and are a focus in both humanitarian and development settings:

(a) Promoting adolescent girls' nutrition, pregnancy care, and prevention of HIV/AIDS and human papilloma virus (HPV);

(b) Advancing adolescent girls' secondary education, learning and skills, including STEM;

(c) Preventing and responding to child marriage and early unions;

(d) Preventing and responding to GBV in emergencies;

(e) Facilitating accessible and dignified menstrual hygiene management (MHM).

35. These priorities vary slightly from the four targeted priorities in GAP 2014-2017. In GAP 2018-2021, gender-responsive adolescent health is both more specific and streamlined, and MHM is a separate targeted priority. Skills, especially STEM, are emphasized in addition to secondary education, and early unions are addressed along with child marriage.

36. A gender focus across sectoral efforts facilitates collaboration and efficiencies that improve more than one outcome. For example, girls' schooling helps to prevent child marriage and early unions, which are closely linked to adolescent pregnancy and HIV risk, as well as the experience of violence. Lack of nutrition for adolescent girls impacts their ability to learn and survive childbirth. Conflict and emergency situations not only increase girls' exposure to GBV, but also increase their health risks, diminish their educational opportunities, and expose them to coping mechanisms such as child marriage and early unions.

1. Promoting adolescent girls' nutrition, pregnancy care, and prevention of HIV/AIDS and HPV

37. While adolescence carries new health risks for both girls and boys, millions of girls face gender-specific vulnerabilities, with lifelong consequences: pregnancy, higher risks of HIV, HPV and cervical cancer, and inadequate nutrition. As of 2016, 73 UNICEF country offices were focusing on the targeted priority of gender-responsive adolescent health, working with governments and partners to promote an integrated approach to sexual and reproductive health and rights as a cornerstone to girls' well-being and empowerment.

38. From 2018 to 2021, UNICEF will build on this progress, leveraging its partnerships, especially with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the World Health Organization (WHO), and ongoing work across sectors to improve age- and sex-specific quality, integrated health services and to shape more gender-equitable policy and social environments to reduce girls' health risks and negative outcomes.

39. Nutrition. The combination of poverty and gender norms can circumscribe girls' access to nutritious foods, placing them at higher risk of malnutrition at a time when the biological transitions of puberty, and in many cases, pregnancy, childbirth and lactation, render girls' bodies more vulnerable to poor health. There is a growing global effort under way, with resonance in national agendas, to address the nutritional needs of adolescents at scale, with a particular focus on girls. Currently, UNICEF supports governments to reach 40 million adolescents annually, about half of them girls, with nutrition services.

40. By 2021, UNICEF will support scale-up efforts to deliver integrated, gender-responsive packages of interventions to address malnutrition among 70 million adolescent girls annually, both in and out of school. In the context of major global movements such as Scaling Up Nutrition, UNICEF will collaborate with development and humanitarian partners to advocate for and generate evidence on which scalable, integrated nutrition and education packages work to transform girls' lives, as well as to address widespread data gaps on gender-specific adolescent nutrition.

41. Pregnancy care. When compared with pregnancy among older age groups, pregnancy during adolescence puts girls and their newborns at greater risk of complications and death. In humanitarian crises, the risk of pregnancy-related death is twice as high for girls aged 15 to 19 and five times higher for girls aged 10 to 14, compared to women in their twenties.

42. From 2018 to 2021, UNICEF will build on its strong track record of partnering effectively to reach adolescent girls with critical antenatal and post-natal care and skilled birth attendance to uphold the safety and dignity of young mothers and help more children to get a healthy start in life. UNICEF will also continue its partnership with UNFPA in supporting pregnancy prevention for girls, by improving their knowledge of sexual and reproductive health and access to services.

43. UNICEF and partners will strengthen pregnancy-care services for adolescent girls through health centres and community outreach, including as part of global alliances such as Every Woman Every Child. UNICEF will support governments in equipping mainstream public health systems to be responsive to the needs of pregnant girls, and implement standards for adolescent-friendly health services within quality-of-care initiatives for maternal and child health.

44. HIV and AIDS. Despite global progress in slowing the spread of HIV, new infections are rising disproportionately among adolescent girls, the only group for whom AIDS-related deaths are increasing. Through the All In! initiative, UNICEF supports the development and implementation of evidence-driven country plans and investments in adolescent HIV prevention in 25 focus countries, in partnership with United Nations agencies, governments and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, among others.

45. In 2018-2021, UNICEF and partners will accelerate and scale up existing HIV interventions for adolescent girls in high-prevalence settings, supporting governments to strengthen data-driven advocacy and subnational and local data collection disaggregated by sex and key populations. They will also support development and delivery of packages of combination prevention interventions tailored to the needs of adolescent girls, linking to cash grants, social protection schemes, psychosocial support, risk-reduction counselling, and education on HIV/AIDS knowledge and testing.

46. HPV. Inoculation against HPV, the sexually transmitted virus that causes cervical cancer, is critical to protect the health of adolescent girls. Restrictive norms around gender and sexuality, however, too often prevent girls from receiving this safe, life-saving vaccine. UNICEF has been a key partner with the United Nations Joint Global Programme for Prevention and Control of Cervical Cancer, Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and WHO in bringing HPV vaccines to adolescent girls in developing countries through both research and service delivery.

47. From 2018 to 2021, UNICEF and partners will support countries interested in introducing the HPV vaccine. As a procurer of vaccines and main partner in the Expanded Programme on Immunization, UNICEF will facilitate roll-out and scale-up of the vaccine. To increase acceptance and uptake of the vaccine, UNICEF will

support use of gender-sensitive communication strategies to fight misconceptions and clarify the vaccine's protective effect on girls.

2. Advancing adolescent girls' secondary education, learning and skills development, including STEM

48. Evidence shows that advancing girls' secondary education is one of the most transformative development strategies to invest in. Completion of secondary education brings the most significant positive benefits to girls and societies — from dramatically increased lifetime earnings and national growth rates, to reductions in child marriage, stunting, and child and maternal mortality.

49. In countries with gender disparity in access to and completion of secondary education, girls are more likely to be disadvantaged. Girls who are poor or members of ethnic or linguistic minorities, and/or residents of rural areas or urban slums, are particularly disadvantaged. Even where girls do complete secondary education, traditional gender- based expectations can deprive girls of critical knowledge and skills around confidence and assertion, as well as innovation and technology for competitiveness in the job market.

50. In 2016, a total of 60 UNICEF country programmes prioritized girls' secondary education. Through 2021, UNICEF will build on and scale up this work to support disadvantaged adolescent girls to transition to and complete secondary education and improve skills, including in STEM. UNICEF will assist national efforts to strengthen gender-equitable education systems and reduce gender-related social, cultural, and financial barriers to improve education for adolescent girls.

51. UNICEF will work with key partners, including the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), the Global Partnership for Education, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Bank and others to support investment in addressing distance-related barriers to education, re-entry policies for young mothers, and MHM in schools. Social protection measures, including cash transfers, will be a focus to improve girls' transition to and retention in secondary school.

52. UNICEF will support the skills development of girls at secondary level through at-scale models that can be embedded in national systems, developing capabilities in girls for both personal and social advancement as well as for employment, especially in fields underrepresented by women. In partnership with UNGEI and others, UNICEF will support the development and implementation of mechanisms to prevent and respond to school-related GBV at national and school levels.

3. Preventing and responding to child marriage and early unions

53. There are 750 million women and girls alive today who were married before their eighteenth birthday. Child marriage robs girls of their childhood and constrains their life options, lowering education levels, and increasing adolescent pregnancy and domestic violence. During GAP 2014-2017, UNICEF and partners, including UNFPA, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), Girls Not Brides, and many governments, worked together to place child marriage high on the international development agenda, as a target under Sustainable Development Goal 5. As the custodian for the indicator to track progress on this target, UNICEF continues to advance the collection and utilization of data and evidence on child marriage.

54. By 2016, a total of 60 UNICEF country offices across all regions focused on preventing child marriage and early unions, as well as supporting girls already in

marriage or union. Over the next four years, UNICEF will work within the framework of the Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage, which UNICEF coordinates with UNFPA, to support the 12 countries covered by the programme, and to expand the learning on successful interventions to the broader range of countries working on the issue, including those in conflict and emergency settings. This will involve accelerating programming in regions where both the prevalence and burden of child marriage are especially high, while supporting countries across regions with knowledge-sharing and dissemination of tools and guidance, helping to foster a robust global community of practice.

55. UNICEF will continue to work with Governments to support development, budgeting, and implementation of national action plans on child marriage and advocate for legislative shifts, in conjunction with local civil society and government. A critical task will be to consolidate and embed in national systems scalable models of interventions to advance girls' agency and retention in school and create an enabling environment in schools and legal systems. Efforts will also strengthen health systems to facilitate sexual and reproductive health information and services that are responsive to adolescent girls. Successful scalable models for engaging mothers, fathers, boys, communities and other influential actors will be replicated to expand efforts to change gender norms and invest in the development and empowerment of adolescent girls. By 2021, UNICEF-supported programmes aim to reach at least 2.5 million adolescent girls with prevention and care interventions to address child marriage.

4. Preventing and responding to gender-based violence in emergencies

56. Gender-based violence is one of the most pervasive violations of human rights across the world. Conflict situations, disasters and displacement can intensify the various forms of GBV that girls and women endure in times of peace and stability, while limiting the availability of health and other services to support survivors. The increasing scale of humanitarian crises has called upon UNICEF to step up its preparedness and response to GBV in emergencies. In 2016, UNICEF provided 4.6 million women, girls and boys across 53 countries with a package of GBV in emergencies prevention and response services.

57. In partnership with local women's groups, UNFPA, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme, the International Rescue Committee and others, UNICEF will continue to leverage its work across the education, health, nutrition, WASH and protection sectors to prevent and respond to GBV in emergencies, and build prevention and mitigation into the efforts of all UNICEF-led clusters. This entails continued delivery of GBV in Emergencies Response Packages covering coordinated life-saving response services for survivors of sexual violence; improving the safety of girls and women through distribution of dignity kits; accessible and relevant safe-space programming and safety planning with communities; strengthening social work, social protection and health systems; addressing negative gender norms and practices; and promoting supportive legislative and policy frameworks.

58. UNICEF will also reinforce staff capacity across programme sectors to address GBV in emergencies, including through training on the UNICEF GBV in Emergencies Programme Resource Pack and the 2015 Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) GBV Guidelines. UNICEF will contribute to the global ecosystem of learning and innovation related to GBV in emergencies, including piloting data technologies to map GBV risks, and improve women's and girls' participation and decision-making in shaping services. To support learning and improved interventions to meet the evolving needs of girls and women in emergencies, UNICEF will measure the country-level impact of implementing the

UNICEF Minimum GBV in Emergencies Response Package, and increase the visibility and diffusion of successful practices.

5. Facilitating accessible and dignified menstrual hygiene management

59. The ability of adolescent girls to safely manage their monthly menstrual cycle in privacy and with dignity is fundamental to their health, psychosocial well-being and mobility. Millions of girls in low-resource and emergency contexts without access to adequate MHM facilities and supplies experience stigma and social exclusion while also forgoing important educational, social and economic opportunities. Delivering quality MHM resources and information is important for building the confidence and freedom of girls during adolescence. It is also a gateway for other gender-transformative interventions, such as life skills, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and community-level support.

60. In 2016, UNICEF supported girls in 45 countries to better manage their menstruation, as a growing component of its programming for WASH in schools, and reached nearly 1 million girls and women in humanitarian emergencies with menstrual hygiene supplies. UNICEF has also played a critical role in raising the profile of MHM globally, convening partners through forums such as the MHM Virtual Conference and MHM in Ten Meeting, in partnership with civil society, governments, academics, women's groups, and experts in health, education and WASH.

61. From 2018 to 2021, UNICEF will work with these and other partners, including WHO, UNESCO, WaterAid, and private sector partners to expand and scale up its work on MHM by designing and implementing a scalable multisectoral programming package to cover essential MHM information, support, services and facilities for adolescent girls in low-resource settings, building upon research conducted in 14 countries. This package will be tested and integrated into platforms that are poised to take it to scale, covering adolescent girls both in and out of school, taking into account the specific needs of girls with disabilities and girls in conflict and disaster settings.

IV. Gender in programme strategies and institutional systems

62. Improving UNICEF strategies and systems to be more gender-responsive is a core objective for achieving programmatic results, and necessary for UNICEF to meet its organizational commitments to gender equality as specified in the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) and United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. As reflected in the Strategic Plan, UNICEF will mainstream gender equality in (a) the strategies necessary for designing and implementing quality programmes at scale, and (b) the capacity and accountability in institutional systems to effectively execute those strategies.

A. Gender equality in quality programming at scale

63. In order to foster high-quality, gender-responsive programme design and implementation, UNICEF will continue to support Governments and other partners to undertake robust gender analysis. The organization will invest in further standardization of tools, technical assistance and guidance, key features of which are discussed below and elaborated in annex 2.

64. UNICEF will work with partners to identify the cause and scope of gender-related barriers to positive outcomes for children, and develop nationally owned, scalable solutions that can bring the resources, skills and contributions of various stakeholders to achieve scalable results.

65. Importantly, UNICEF will also strengthen its ability to undertake gender analysis within the country programme development process to understand the organization's own added value in advancing gender equality, in collaboration with the Government and partners.

1. Generation and use of gender data and evidence

66. Gender data and evidence are the backbone of good gender programming. To fully identify which children are disadvantaged, to what extent and in what manner, disaggregation of data by sex is essential, but often in combination with other disaggregated data (age, poverty, disability, etc.). To the extent possible, UNICEF will prioritize the collection and analysis of disaggregated data and promote more sophisticated measures of gender inequality, beyond gender parity.

67. In partnership with UN-Women, UNFPA and others, UNICEF will support improvements in the collection and analysis of girl-related and sex-disaggregated Sustainable Development Goals data for Tier I indicators, including by building capacity in regions and countries. UNICEF will work with these partners to integrate improved gender measures in the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, Demographic and Health Survey, country surveys and censuses, as well as in administrative data for education, health, WASH and humanitarian-monitoring systems. Through continued participation in the Interagency Expert Group on Gender Statistics UNICEF will support national statistical agencies in improving gender statistics for monitoring gender-related targets in the Sustainable Development Goals.

68. UNICEF will also work to improve participatory and qualitative gender data sources, and tap innovative data sources from social media and other platforms. User-friendly showcasing of gender data will be expanded, including via web-based platforms, and in coordination with other United Nations gender-related data initiatives and portals, such as UN-Women's SDG Data flagship programme. Similarly, the evidence base on effective gender-responsive and transformative interventions provides UNICEF and partners with the basis for more informed programming.

2. Gender analysis for effective programme design and implementation

69. UNICEF work must be grounded in high-quality gender analysis that illuminates the nature and scale of gender inequalities affecting outcomes for children. Through 2021, the aim will be to further strengthen the Gender Programmatic Review tool that encapsulates this analysis and standardize its use across countries and programme areas. Gender analysis will form a routine part of the planning, design and review of the country programme.

70. The use of a gender causal framework will be expanded to integrate gender analysis into a country programme's Situation Analysis by mapping how in any given context, gender inequality is reflected in outcomes for children, and in the intermediate structural determinants of those outcomes. For example, in South and East Asia, and increasingly in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, son preference is the root cause of the neglect of daughters in health care and treatment. In Eastern and Southern Africa, health differentials result from a different gender dynamic: the high HIV/AIDS risk for adolescent girls is driven by poverty and cross-generational sex.

71. An assessment of gender-related bottlenecks and barriers will be an integral part of the analysis for prioritizing where, how, and which interventions will be most effective and feasible. Gender-related barriers contributing negatively to child outcomes range from women's and girls' lack of resources, safety, mobility, knowledge and decision-making, as well as the male-female division of labour and gender norms. For example, a mother's lack of mobility alone — due either to prohibitive norms or lack of transportation — may constrain the achievement of results on immunization, pneumonia care, stunting, birth registration and other child outcomes.

72. Opportunities and options, in contrast, signal a positive context for advancing gender results. In the countries where it works, UNICEF will support the efforts of Governments and civil society actors to advance their national goals for gender equality by building on existing favourable laws and policies, institutional capacities, research and the evidence base, and complementary partners. Especially opportunistic in this context are longstanding relationships with ministries of gender or of women and child welfare, which are in the position to take leadership in convening and coordinating cross-sectoral efforts to advance national priorities. UNICEF-supported gender analysis can point to partnership possibilities with other government agencies or ministries favourably inclined towards gender equality — for example, the health ministry for quality maternal care, or the education ministry for advancing girls' education.

3. Partnerships and coherence

73. UNICEF will continue to leverage the close alliances it has forged with United Nations agencies and other global bodies to advance progress on gender equality. In particular, UNICEF collaboration with UNFPA, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UN-Women is explicit in addressing five key areas of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: violence against women and girls, economic empowerment of women and girls, sexual and reproductive health and rights (including ending child marriage), and resources for gender-equality programming. The UNICEF ongoing joint programmes with UNFPA on ending child marriage and female genital mutilation/cutting are prime examples of agencies with distinct but overlapping missions joining forces to strengthen programme quality and expand reach.

74. UNICEF maintains its role in the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, the United Nations Development Group Gender Task Team and the IASC gender reference group, and implementation of the United Nations system-wide action plan. At the country level, UNICEF will continue to play a pivotal role in setting United Nations system-wide gender priorities through the process of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. As part of the gender theme groups and other inter-agency initiatives, UNICEF will support the tracking of performance on the Sustainable Development Goals, Convention on the Rights of the Child, and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

75. UNICEF will continue to be a key partner to governments, civil society, research organizations and the private sector, in fostering new solutions and identifying additional resources for expanded financing for gender-equitable results for children.

4. Resources

76. The resources established under GAP 2014-2017 allowed UNICEF to build a core gender team, which has been key to results achieved to date. The initial

investment to develop this expertise has been incorporated into the UNICEF integrated budget. The investment of catalytic resources will continue, including for additional gender posts on data, evidence and humanitarian work, and especially for the strengthening of gender capacity.

77. The overall expenditure on gender will be in line with the United Nations system-wide action plan and QCPR. Efforts to increase the gender thematic fund will continue, while integrating budgets for gender expertise, partners and activities into resource mobilization and utilization efforts across sectors.

B. Capacity and accountability on gender results

1. Capable and learning organization on gender equality

78. UNICEF will build on the strides made during GAP 2014-2017 in strengthening gender expertise and capacity, especially at the country level and within sectors, with the launch of the Gender Pro initiative in 2017, with two aims: (a) support more robust capacity around gender analysis, data, measurement and applied programming among gender focal points and all staff; and (b) build a cadre of high-quality gender specialists — especially within sectors — who have a sophisticated understanding of applied programming and measurement in both gender and one or more sectors.

79. The capacity-building programme for gender specialists will be rolled out within UNICEF and also to interested partners in the development and humanitarian sectors, to contribute to expanded gender expertise in the field more broadly.

80. The capacity-building effort is accompanied by the establishment of a gender-credentialing system, setting standards for high-quality gender skills as well as a pathway for professional growth among staff. Countries, regions and headquarters will also be supported to further invest in collaborative teams and management structures that facilitate shared ownership and contributions by both sectoral and gender experts to achieving gender equitable results for children.

81. UNICEF will accelerate its effort to improve knowledge management to keep staff abreast of trends and best practices in gender programming and organizational change. It will also expand the global and regional gender networks established since 2014, systemizing information-sharing platforms. Staff will be supported through an evolved web platform showcasing UNICEF resources and linking to other gender-resource portals across the United Nations agencies and other key partners.

82. Building on recent gains, UNICEF will continue to make strides in achieving gender parity at all staffing levels, with senior-level posts remaining a priority. The aim is, by 2021, to achieve full gender parity at the P-5 level and above (moving from 48 per cent of all positions occupied by women).

83. UNICEF aims to be a more gender-responsive workplace, supporting all staff to take advantage of family-friendly policies such as maternity and paternity leave and flextime. UNICEF will continue using the annual staff survey and other data to assess levels of satisfaction and concern among male and female staff, incorporating responsive action into management decisions. Women's leadership initiatives will be supported.

2. Organizational accountability for results on gender equality

84. Accountability for achieving results on gender equality, as articulated in GAP 2018-2021 and the Strategic Plan, will continue to be managed in a chain from the

Office of the Executive Director to regional directors to country representatives, the latter ultimately responsible for delivering results on the ground. The GAP Steering Committee will continue to be responsible for monitoring implementation of the GAP, particularly capacity-strengthening, resource allocation and progress on results, including country and divisional progress on programmatic results and key performance indicators.

85. As the GAP is aligned with the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, its results on programmatic and institutional performance are drawn from the Strategic Plan results framework. Progress towards achieving results will be measured against outcomes and outputs indicators from the Strategic Plan.

86. Progress on programming excellence will be tracked through four Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the Strategic Plan: (a) country offices undertaking robust gender analysis; (b) country programme documents meeting or exceeding standards of excellence on gender equality; (c) country offices meeting or exceeding standards on gender in programme implementation and accountability; and (d) compliance with United Nations SwAP performance indicators. Learning from UNDP use of the "Gender Seal", UNICEF will reward countries exceeding standards on KPIs b and c, encouraging healthy emulation.

87. Three additional management indicators will track progress on capacity and resources: (a) gender parity in posts P-5 and above; (b) percentage of eligible staff completing gender training; and (c) percentage of expenditures on programming with a primary focus on gender equality. The last of these is included as a QCPR indicator adopted by all funds and programmes.

88. UNICEF will continue its efforts to strengthen its evaluation function to better integrate gender into programme evaluations. Following the lessons learned from the evaluation of UNICEF humanitarian functions, a new plan is under development for training country offices, and criteria are being set for programme evaluations to more effectively assess performance on gender-equality results. UNICEF will undertake a full evaluation of its effectiveness on gender mainstreaming in 2019.

V. Conclusion

89. UNICEF is committed to gender equality as core to its mission to realize the rights of all children, especially the most disadvantaged, and its efforts to contribute to progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Leveraging global momentum and the successes and lessons learned from implementing its Gender Action Plan 2014-2017, UNICEF will take its work on advancing gender equality to the next level in 2018-2021, by taking quality gender programming to scale for greater reach and impact. This will entail strengthening existing and forging new partnerships with governments, United Nations agencies, civil society, the private sector and other partners; taking a more focused programmatic approach that addresses the gender-related barriers to better outcomes for all children, with a focus on adolescent girls; and continued investments in institutional strengthening and capacity-building at UNICEF to improve its contributions to gender equality and the well-being of children, families and communities.

Annex 1: Demonstrable results for gender integration

Gender equality for girls and boys (1)

Gender equality in care and support of all children (2)

Goal 1

Gender-equitable health care and nutrition for girls and boys (1)

Gender differences in nutrition, healthcare-seeking and treatment, and cultural and community norms such as son preference or cross-generational sex contribute to gender-differentiated mortality and morbidity for boys and girls. To address these issues, UNICEF will:

- Collect and analyse sex-disaggregated data to inform tailored interventions
- Strengthen health facilities and community platforms to address gender inequalities in care and counselling
- Develop relevant indicators to improve data and measurement, and test interventions to address the gender dimensions of adolescent mental health in low- and middle-income countries

Quality maternal care (2)

Lack of quality maternal care, especially during labour and delivery and the immediate post-natal period, is a major factor in continued high maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality. UNICEF will:

- Work with partners to strengthen national systems to implement World Health Organization (WHO) maternal and neonatal health quality-of-care standards, including treating women with respect and dignity; appropriate water, sanitation, energy and medical supplies in facilities; increasing knowledge and information of women and family members regarding antenatal and post-natal care, as well as breastfeeding options to empower women to make decisions that are manageable for their health and needs.

Gender equality in community health systems (2)

Gender inequality is common in the health workforce, with women often underpaid, overworked and underrepresented in professional, supervisory and decision-making roles. Female community health workers in particular are often low-skilled, voluntary or temporary workers. Working with partners to develop more gender-equitable health systems that can deliver quality services to children and families, UNICEF will:

- Promote the professionalization of female and male frontline health workers — by collecting and utilizing data on their role and impact, with a gender perspective
- Advocate for gender-equitable national policies and financing for community health systems to train, pay and empower health workers adequately and ensure a gender balance in this critical professional category

Goal 2

Gender equality in access, retention, and learning in education for girls and boys (1)

Gender norms underpin barriers for girls and boys in accessing quality education. Barriers for girls include child marriage, gender-based violence, inadequate water, WASH facilities, and a heavy burden of household chores. For boys, barriers range from pressure to earn money to stereotypes around masculinity that encourage truancy. UNICEF will:

- Work with governments and partners to develop national education sector plans addressing gendered socio-cultural and financial barriers to quality education. These will aim to prevent gender-based violence, promote measures such as cash transfers and school feeding programmes, remove gender stereotypes in teaching materials, train teachers in gender-responsive pedagogy, and promote formal and non-formal learning opportunities, especially in humanitarian situations.

Gender equality in teaching and education systems (2)

A gender-balanced supply of high-quality teachers is essential to making education systems more gender-equitable and supportive of quality education for children, especially in improving learning outcomes. UNICEF will:

- Work with governments to address teacher deployment so as to facilitate the placement of female teachers in safe spaces and support the development of gender-responsive policies to advance teachers of both sexes
- Promote gender-responsive pre- and in-service teacher training, and adequately equip teachers to ensure children's safety in schools
- Ensure that disadvantaged girls can access teachers education and training to establish a pipeline of quality female teachers

Goal 3

Gender-based prevention and response to violence against girls and boys (1)

The causes, risks, forms and implications of violence are often gender-differentiated. For example, only girls experience female genital mutilation/cutting, and women and girls are at increased risk of domestic and intimate-partner violence; boys are more likely to become child soldiers or experience gang violence. In addressing gender-based violence against children, UNICEF will:

- Build the capacity and systems of multiple sectors to provide gender-responsive service delivery and gender-responsive access to justice, particularly in school-based settings
- Promote social and behavioural change efforts within communities and institutions to shift attitudes and practices involving violence
- Emphasize gendered dimensions in the implementation of a package of strategies to end violence against children developed with multiple partners to foster harmonized action.

Goal 4

Gender-responsive WASH systems (2)

Women and girls are disproportionately responsible for collecting and using household water, and are disproportionately affected by lack of sanitation and hygiene services, particularly in humanitarian situations. However, they are often not included in the design and management of WASH resources and services. UNICEF will:

- Assess whether current programming models, such as participatory community-led total sanitation efforts, or emerging models such as market-based approaches, effectively support an economic and/or time-saving empowering role for women
- Strengthen gender-responsive measurement and monitoring systems for results of women's roles in WASH, especially in emergencies, to inform more efficient programming and effective supplies, such as dignity kits

Goal 5

Non-gender-discriminatory roles, expectations and practices for girls and boys (1)

Gender discriminatory roles and practices consist of rules, behaviours, and attitudes and expectations that differentiate between boys and girls and limit their rights, well-being, and opportunities. To address discriminatory policies as well as the socialization processes that negatively define gender roles and practices, UNICEF will:

- Support communities to transform social narratives and promote behaviour change through parenting, early childhood and adolescent-empowerment programmes
- Promote gender-equitable and affordable childcare that reduces women's care burden, engages fathers and men in caring for children, and improves the skills and professional advancement of mostly female childcare workers
- Advance policy shifts and implementation through advocacy, data generation and use, and monitoring systems for non-gender-discriminatory early childhood, extracurricular, training, sports, vocational, and mentorship policies for girls and boys

Annex 2: Programme excellence and gender programming at scale: key elements of gender analysis

Figure 1: Gender in country programme development process

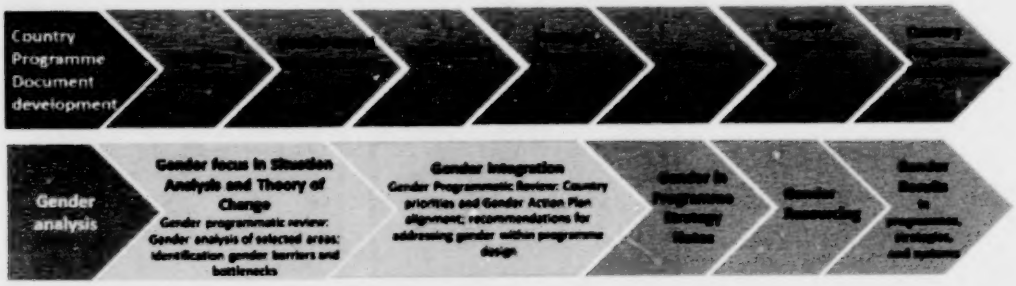
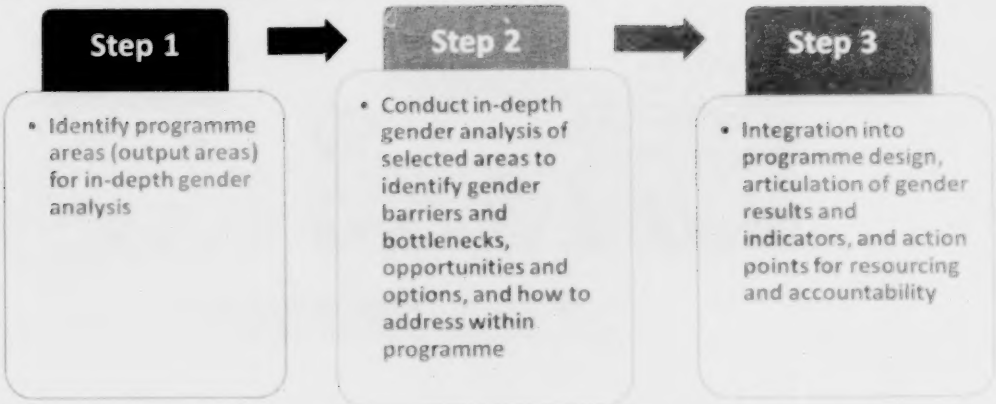

Country Programme Document development
Gender analysis
Gender focus in Situation Analysis and Theory of Change
Gender programmatic review: Gender analysis of selected areas; identification gender barriers and bottlenecks
Gender integration
Gender Programmatic Review: Country priorities and Gender Action Plan alignment; recommendations for addressing gender within programme design

Figure 2: Gender Programmatic Review


Step 1
• Identify programme areas (output areas) for in-depth gender analysis
Step 2
• Conduct in-depth gender analysis of selected areas to identify gender barriers and bottlenecks, opportunities and options, and how to address within programme
Step 3
• Integration into programme design, articulation of gender results and indicators, and action points for resourcing and accountability

For UNICEF country offices, a Gender Review is mandatory at least once through the programme cycle. The Gender Programmatic Review (GPR) is a step-by-step tool that guides country offices in strengthening gender programming in alignment with country priorities, the Strategic Plan and the Gender Action Plan. It is the key tool through which country offices integrate gender at all stages of the Country Programme Document development process.

Figure 3: The five GAP principles for gender integration in programming

Gender-responsive or transformative programmes should be:

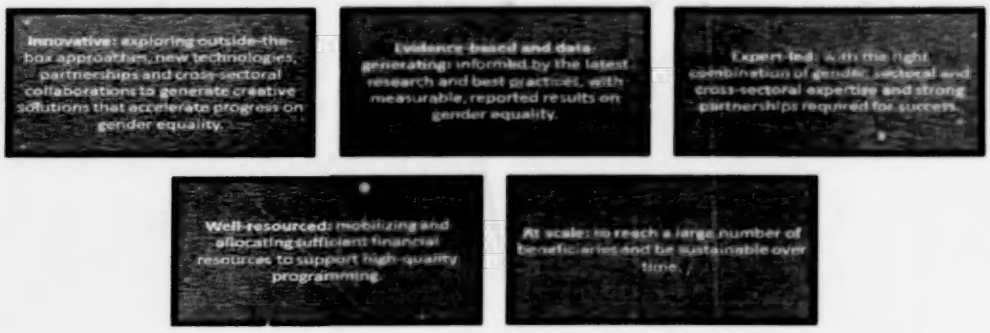
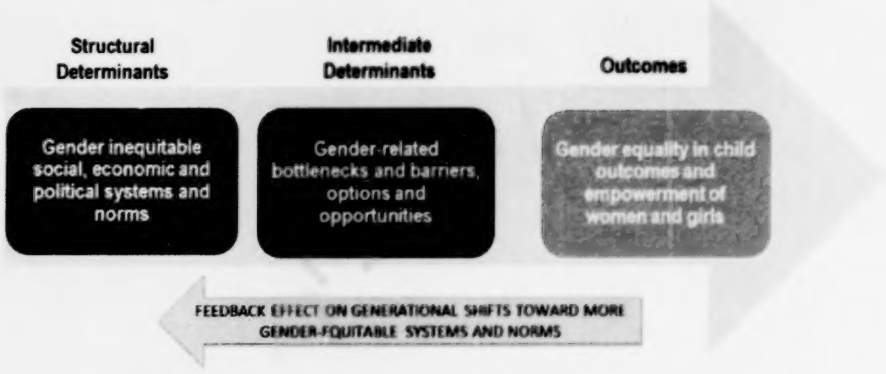

Innovative: exploring outside-the-box approaches, new technologies, partnerships and cross-sectoral collaborations to generate creative solutions that accelerate progress on gender equality.
Evidence-based and data-generating: informed by the latest research and best practices, with measurable, reported results on gender equality.
Expert-led: with the right combination of gender, sectoral and cross-sectoral expertise and strong partnerships required for success.
Well-resourced: mobilizing and allocating sufficient financial resources to support high-quality programming.
At scale: to reach a large number of beneficiaries and be sustainable over time.

Figure 4: GAP causal framework

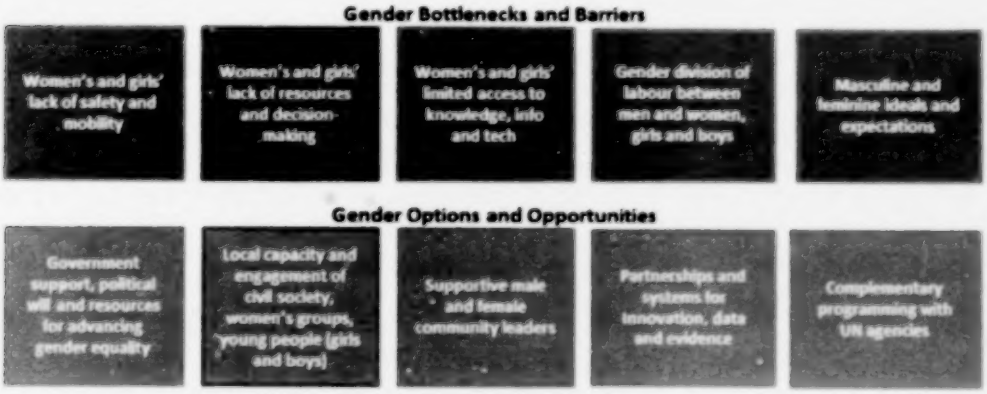

Structural Determinants
Intermediate Determinants
Outcomes
Gender inequitable social, economic and political systems and norms
Gender-related bottlenecks and barriers, options and opportunities
Gender equality in child outcomes and empowerment of women and girls
FEEDBACK EFFECT ON GENERATIONAL SHIFTS TOWARD MORE GENDER-EQUITABLE SYSTEMS AND NORMS

The GAP causal framework is used to identify how and where gender inequalities affect child outcomes, in order to develop programmatic responses and determine means for tracking results. In particular, the framework identifies how gender inequalities at the structural and intermediate-determinants levels influence outcomes for girls and boys. Gender-equitable outcomes in turn provide a feedback loop for generational shifts towards more gender-equitable systems and norms.

Figure 5: Using Gender Data and Evidence

Data on gender outcomes for children may apply to both girls and boys (e.g. levels of education), or only girls (e.g. proportion of pregnant adolescent girls), or to mostly girls (e.g. percent experiencing child marriage) or mostly boys (e.g. percent child soldiers).
Sex Disaggregation is only a first step. Sex disaggregation should be done in combination with age, wealth, or other key measures. National data patterns may differ radically from global patterns. Some sex disaggregated data can be deceiving because of the measures used and should be triangulated.
Good sources of gender data are not limited to the DHS and MICS, but also health and education monitoring systems, national census and other statistics, real time data from humanitarian monitoring, and a range of qualitative and participatory data sources.
It is important to not just look at outcome data on gender, but also data on determinants. Gender Profiles, with national data on indicators that provide an overview of gender equality and the status of women, and girls and boys in the country are an important resource.

Figure 6: Gender barriers and bottlenecks, options and opportunities


Gender Bottlenecks and Barriers
Women's and girls' lack of safety and mobility
Women's and girls' lack of resources and decision-making
Women's and girls' limited access to knowledge, info and tech
Gender division of labour between men and women, girls and boys
Masculine and feminine ideals and expectations
Gender Options and Opportunities
Government support, political will and resources for advancing gender equality
Local capacity and engagement of civil society, women's groups, young people (girls and boys)
Supportive male and female community leaders
Partnerships and systems for innovation, data and evidence
Complementary programming with UN agencies

Once gender inequalities that negatively impact child outcomes are identified, the Barriers and Bottlenecks and Options and Opportunities analyses are used to identify solutions to address those disparities.

United Nations E/ICEF/2017/17

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
18 July 2017

Original: English

For decision

United Nations Children's Fund
Executive Board
Second regular session 2017
12-15 September 2017
Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018-2021

Summary

Seventy years after UNICEF was established, the organization's mission to promote the full attainment of the rights of all children is as urgent as ever.

The UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 is anchored in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and charts a course towards attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals and the realization of a future in which every child has a fair chance in life. It sets out measurable results for children, especially the most disadvantaged, including in humanitarian situations, and defines the change strategies and enablers that support their achievement.

Working together with Governments, United Nations partners, the private sector, civil society and with the full participation of children, UNICEF remains steadfast in its commitment to realize the rights of all children, everywhere, and to achieve the vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a world in which no child is left behind.

* E/ICEF/2017/14.

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Working together to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda

Common chapter to the Strategic Plans of UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and UN-Women

Our commitment

As we set our strategic directions for the next four years, we — the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) — commit to working better together, characterized by stronger coherence and collaboration. We note with appreciation the United Nations Secretary-General's report on repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Together we will step up our joint efforts, with a sense of urgency, to better support countries to achieve sustainable development. In line with the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (QCPR), we will help shape a United Nations development system that responds to our changing world and works in increasingly effective ways to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals. Our strategic plans represent a clear commitment to United Nations reform and greater coherence in support of results.

Key areas of collaboration

The principles of *leaving no one behind* and *reaching the furthest behind first* permeate all four of our strategic plans. In direct response to the QCPR, we will harness our respective collaborative advantage in compliance with our respective mandates in these key areas:

(a) Eradicating poverty;

(b) Addressing climate change;

(c) Improving adolescent and maternal health;

(d) Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls;

(e) Ensuring greater availability and use of disaggregated data for sustainable development;

(f) Emphasizing that development is a central goal in itself, and that in countries in conflict and post-conflict situations the development work of the entities of the United Nations development system can contribute to peacebuilding and sustaining peace, in accordance with national plans, needs and priorities and respecting national ownership.

These areas of collaborative advantage have positive multiplier effects across the Sustainable Development Goals and require multisectoral approaches for which the diversity of the United Nations system is an asset. They also provide a basis for closer collaboration with other United Nations entities as well as other partners. As detailed in the annex to the common chapter of the strategic plans, our outputs will complementarily contribute to common results in these key areas, in accordance with our respective mandates and comparative advantages. The results will be tracked by the common Sustainable Development Goal indicators that are adopted at outcome or impact level in our respective strategic plans, including but not limited to the following:

(a) *Eradicating poverty*: SDG 1.1.1. Proportion of population below the international poverty line by sex, age, employment status and geographical location;

(b) *Eradicating poverty*: SDG 1.3.1. Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable;

(c) *Adolescent health and HIV*: SDG 3.3.1: Number of HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected population, by sex, age and key populations;

(d) *Gender equality*: SDG 5.2.1. Proportion of ever partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age;

(e) *Strengthening data for sustainable development*: SDG 17.18.1. Proportion of sustainable development indicators produced at the national level with full disaggregation when relevant to the target, in accordance with the fundamental principles of official statistics;

(f) *Prevention, resilience, climate change*: SDGs 1.5.1 and 11.5.1 and 13.1.1. Numbers of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population.

Strengthening how we work together

We will work together more effectively at all levels. Most importantly, our strategic plans reflect a change in how we work at country level, recognizing there is no "one size fits all", and fully affirming the primary responsibility of national Governments for their countries' development and for coordinating, on the basis of national strategies and priorities, all types of external assistance.

We will plan together. As part of United Nations country teams we will support national governments and partners to work towards common results and indicators, and collectively report on them through the revised United Nations Development Assistance Framework, as signed by national governments, to drive stronger efficiency and effectiveness. In a significant step forward, these common results will now be underpinned by a mandatory common country assessment from which theories of change can be drawn, and knowledge and expertise can be collaboratively used. This is an important improvement. During the 2030 Agenda era, the United Nations development system, at the country level, will support national priorities on the Sustainable Development Goals; share a common analysis of the issues; and plan, monitor and report on shared results. This increased programmatic collaboration will strengthen system-wide coherence at all levels as we draw data from joint analysis at country level. This change can be tracked through indicators including but not limited to: (a) percentage of entities meeting or exceeding the System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women minimum standards; and (b) percentage of country offices applying the standard operating procedures according to country context.

We will implement programmes together differently. We will continue to support field offices in developing joint programmes, joint results groups and joint workplans in support of country priorities. On financing, we commit to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development. We will work to leverage public finances, including official development assistance, and support the adoption of policies to increase resource flows for the benefit of partner countries. We will promote integrated partnerships, using the full range of financing tools in support of the Sustainable Development Goals. Building on experiences from

the common budgetary framework at country level, we are moving to jointly support financing strategies for the Sustainable Development Goals, including through innovative financing. These changes can be tracked through indicators including but not limited to: (a) percentage of country offices engaged in joint programmes; (b) thematic funding as a percentage of other resources; and (c) percentage of country offices that track and report on allocations and expenditures using gender markers.

We will enhance multi-stakeholder partnerships. Reflecting the people-centred nature of the 2030 Agenda, we will support innovative platforms that strengthen collaboration with Governments as well as with civil society and the private sector. We will build on recent progress in engaging citizens through volunteerism, empowerment, participation and other means to strengthen national ownership and capacity, and delivery of the sustainable development agenda. We will also intensify collaboration through multi-stakeholder partnerships at national, regional and global levels, and assist in improving mutual accountability for the Sustainable Development Goals in such partnerships. These changes can be tracked through indicators including but not limited to: (a) percentage of total resources from contributions by donors other than the top 15; and (b) percentage share of total funding coming from private sector partners.

We will enhance efficiency together. Underpinning the drive for ever-greater effectiveness and building on progress made in recent years through the standard operating procedures, we will continue to accelerate efficiency gains through business operations strategies, mutual recognition, and broader operational harmonization. These changes can be tracked through indicators including, but not limited, to the percentage of country offices implementing a business operations strategy.

All of the Sustainable Development Goal and QCPR-based indicators presented in this common chapter and in the annex to the common chapter are a subset of a much larger number of indicators shared by two or more entities that can be identified in the results frameworks of the respective strategic plans. We will report on all common indicators through the annual reports on the implementation of our respective strategic plans.

Looking forward

While fully recognizing that the findings and recommendations of the Secretary General's report on repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda will be discussed by Member States, we will continue to fully support the process steered by the Secretary-General and retain the flexibility to respond accordingly to the decisions of Member States through the midterm reviews of the strategic plans.

I. Overview

A. Context of global opportunities and challenges

1. The world has made considerable progress towards realizing the rights of children in the past two and a half decades. The number of children who die before their fifth birthday declined from 12.7 million in 1990 to 5.9 million in 2015. The primary school net enrolment rate in low- and middle-income countries reached 91 per cent in 2015, up from 83 per cent a decade and a half earlier, and gender parity in primary education continues to improve. These are but a few examples of the many advances made for children.

2. Yet, while much has been achieved, many of the world's most disadvantaged girls and boys have not benefited from this progress. Even in countries in which national targets were achieved, they masked glaring inequities within those same countries. Compared to children in the highest income group, the poorest children are nearly twice as likely to die before the age of 5, twice as likely to be stunted, and five times more likely to be out of school. Some 32 million girls are still out of primary school as compared to 29 million boys, with adolescent girls more likely to be illiterate than adolescent boys.

3. The Strategic Plan has been prepared at a time of immense challenges. Conflict and civil strife, natural disasters and climate change, and global epidemics, compounded by other major and often linked treads such as rapid urbanization and mass population movements, all threaten the prospects of leaving no child behind. Rapid demographic shifts and the growing youth bulge in Africa and parts of Asia will bring opportunities to achieve demographic dividends. This will, in turn, depend on reducing equity gaps among children in these continents through scaling up of essential services for the most disadvantaged children and equal opportunities for girls and boys.

4. **Humanitarian response** will potentially continue to be a growing feature of the organization's work. Children in fragile contexts are twice as likely to die before the age of 5, or to be out of school. Girls, in particular, are likely to experience sexual violence and to be at increased risk of harmful practices such as child marriage. Approximately 28 million children have been uprooted by violence and conflict.

5. Despite these challenges, numerous opportunities exist to accelerate progress for children. The 2030 Agenda puts children at the core of the global agenda. In addition to Governments, the private sector is playing an increasingly active role in development. Social media is empowering citizens to exercise their voices, and civil society is helping to expand opportunities for children.

6. Considerable evidence also exists about what works to deliver results for children, and what must change in order to accelerate progress. Starting with the most deprived children is not only right in principle, it is also cost-effective and practical. A focus on children's rights will help the world move more swiftly towards the progressive realization of the targets of the 2030 Agenda.

7. The Strategic Plan therefore reflects the principles of the 2030 Agenda, including the pledge to *leave no one and no child behind* and *to reach the farthest behind first*.

B. Building on the lessons from the previous Strategic Plan

8. Key lessons have emerged over the period of the previous Strategic Plan, 2014-2017.[1]

9. Among these are the need for UNICEF to intensify the strengthening of national systems to assist the most disadvantaged girls and boys. There is a need to scale up equity-focused programming and advocacy, including by focusing interventions on the most disadvantaged children. Increased investment in disaggregated data will greatly improve the monitoring of inequality and discrimination prohibited by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities..

10. Evaluations have also underscored the importance of intensifying community engagement and social mobilization for addressing the demand-related barriers to the fulfilment of child rights.

11. In promoting accountability for child rights, UNICEF should intensify support for inclusive and meaningful participation of children in decisions that affect them, and to ensure that the best interests of the child remain a primary consideration in all actions concerning children.

12. In light of the scale, frequency and complexity of humanitarian crises, risk-informed programming and systems strengthening have become vital for prevention, response and early recovery. Evaluations have highlighted that risk analysis (including analysis of the underlying causes of crises and the different vulnerabilities and risk exposures of affected populations), emergency preparedness, and enhancing humanitarian investments that contribute to longer-term development outcomes, as a key means of strengthening the coherence and complementarity between humanitarian and development programming.

13. Experience across all regions confirms the importance of integrated approaches that address the underlying causes of child rights violations. For example, in protecting girls and boys from violence, exploitation and harmful practices, a key lesson is the importance of strengthening child protection, social protection, education and health systems in an integrated way. The 2016 QCPR emphasizes the use of such integrated approaches as well as the importance of promoting gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls as key to sustainable development.

14. The evaluation on the Review of development effectiveness in UNICEF, 2012-2015, recognizes that country programmes should be strengthened to adequately address gender equality, including through systematic application of gender analysis during programme design and delivery. The review further observes that strengthening results monitoring, reporting and management requires a range of measures, including capacity development for UNICEF staff and for implementing partners, as well as the strengthening of monitoring systems.

15. Furthermore, UNICEF should continue to strengthen its partnerships with Governments and within the United Nations development system, with a view to accelerating implementation of the 2030 Agenda. UNICEF also needs to continue to build on its strong and diverse country programmes of cooperation, network of National Committees, and growing partnerships with the private sector and civil society to accelerate the realization of the rights of all children.

[1] This section is based on the findings of various recent evaluations; the MOPAN 2015-16 Assessments: United Nations Children's Fund, Institutional Assessment Report; and the paper 2016 midterm review of the Strategic Plan, 2014-2017: Lessons learned.

C. Guiding principles of the Strategic Plan

16. The Strategic Plan is grounded in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which provides the foundation for everything UNICEF does. It is also guided by other international human rights treaties and instruments, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. UNICEF works with partners to respect, protect and promote human rights standards and principles, and fundamental freedoms for all girls and boys, without distinction of any kind whatsoever.

17. The Strategic Plan pursues a vision of realizing the rights of every child and does so by starting with the most deprived, because a focus on equity accelerates progress towards achieving the rights of all children. In this context, the Strategic Plan focuses on operationalizing the call to leave no child behind by emphasizing accelerated action for the most marginalized children, including in humanitarian situations. Through sustained advocacy in all contexts, use of disaggregated data and a renewed focus on at-scale service delivery and systems strengthening, UNICEF will work with others to make sure no child is left behind.

18. UNICEF will strengthen the mainstreaming of gender equality across the organization's work, in line with Gender Action Plan, 2018-2021. The Strategic Plan includes enhancing gender-responsive programming for the achievement of results for girls and boys as well as for strengthening systems and processes.

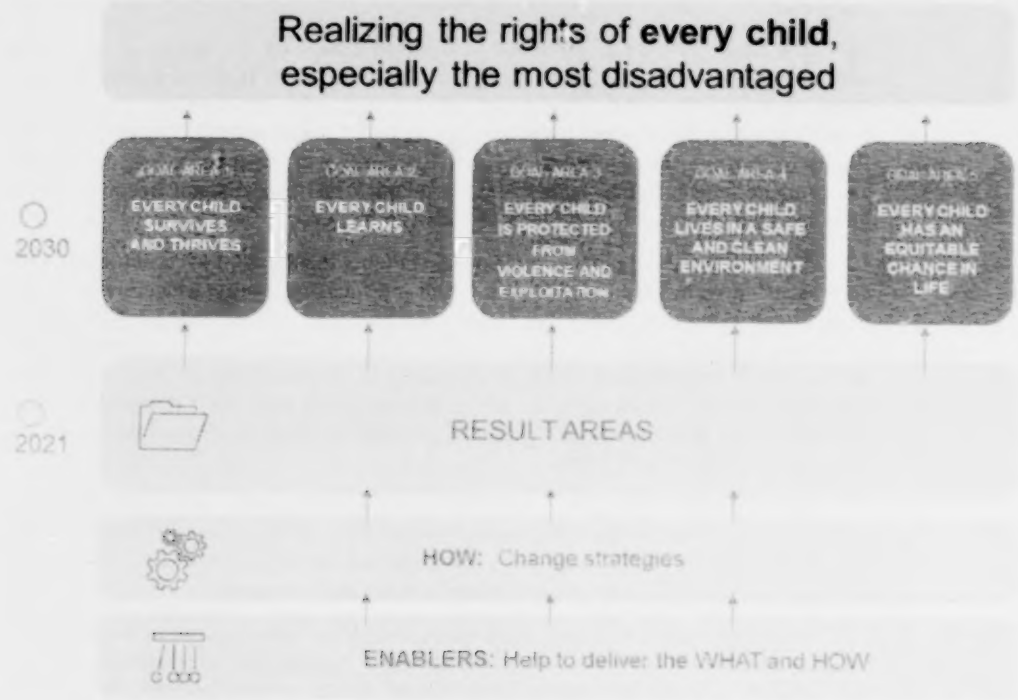
19. With universality as a defining feature, and with a strong anchor in human rights, the Strategic Plan focuses on elements of the 2030 Agenda that bear special relevance for children, namely Sustainable Development Goals 1 to 6, and 16. In addition, UNICEF will work with partners to address the key drivers of inequality, urbanization, climate change, discriminatory practices and the widespread lack of human security (Goals 10, 11, 13 and 17) that undermine the realization of the rights of all children. The Strategic Plan also responds to the outcomes of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development; the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.

20. The Strategic Plan reflects the collaborative advantages of UNICEF and other United Nations entities to pool expertise and reduce duplication in the achievement of results for children. It is also based on the organization's mandate and comparative advantages in relation to United Nations entities in support of the 2030 Agenda. These relate to normative work on child rights, policy advocacy, systems strengthening and service delivery with the goal of leaving no child behind; and maintaining the capacity to scale up humanitarian action while contributing to more resilient and responsive national and local systems.

II. Key elements of the Strategic Plan

21. The Strategic Plan describes the results to be achieved by UNICEF and key partners by 2021 in the context of the 2030 Agenda (the WHAT). It also describes the groups of children who will be reached in diverse contexts (the WHO); the change strategies necessary for the achievement of results (the HOW); and the internal factors that support the change strategies and the achievement of results (the ENABLERS). See the figure below.

Figure: Key elements of the Strategic Plan, 2018-2021


Realizing the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged
2030
GOAL AREA 1
EVERY CHILD SURVIVES AND THRIVES
GOAL AREA 2
EVERY CHILD LEARNS
GOAL AREA 3
EVERY CHILD IS PROTECTED FROM VIOLENCE AND EXPLOITATION
GOAL AREA 4
EVERY CHILD LIVES IN A SAFE AND CLEAN ENVIRONMENT
GOAL AREA 5
EVERY CHILD HAS AN EQUITABLE CHANCE IN LIFE
2021
RESULT AREAS
HOW: Change strategies
ENABLERS: Help to deliver the WHAT and HOW

Envisaged impact

22. Overall, the Strategic Plan seeks to contribute to the realization of the rights of all children, especially the most disadvantaged. This envisaged impact will be achieved through five Goal Areas:

(a) Every child survives and thrives;

(b) Every child learns;

(c) Every child is protected from violence and exploitation;

(d) Every child lives in a safe and clean environment; and

(e) Every child has an equitable chance in life.

23. The fifth Goal Area on "Every child has an equitable chance in life" underpins and cuts across the four others. The Goal Areas are also underpinned by the cross-cutting priorities of gender equality and humanitarian action. In addition, the Strategic Plan promotes synergies across multiple Goal Areas to address early childhood development, adolescent development, and to support children with disabilities.

24. With a focus on children in all contexts, the Goal Areas are interlinked and are reflective of the integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda. Progress under each Goal Area requires, and contributes to, progress under the others. For example, gender equality in learning and skills development, especially for girls at the secondary level (Goal Area 2), is important for reducing child marriage (Goal Area 3) and for adolescent empowerment (Goal 5).

25. The results framework of the Strategic Plan incorporates the impact, outcome and output indicators necessary for monitoring progress. These have been identified on the basis of the UNICEF mandate and comparative advantage in the 2030 Agenda in relation to United Nations entities. While impact- and outcome-level results reflect the combined efforts of all partners, including United Nations entities, output-level results reflect the organization's specific contribution to the 2030 Agenda.

26. Examples of specific collaboration modalities with United Nations entities are described in the annex to the common chapter.

27. While the Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 builds on its predecessor, it has evolved in several ways. The composite nature of Goal Area 1, which incorporates health, nutrition, early childhood development and HIV/AIDS, reflects the importance of integrated approaches to child survival and development. Goal Area 2 prioritizes learning, placing a stronger emphasis on outcomes in education while retaining due attention to access, especially for the most disadvantaged children. Goal Area 3 seeks to protect children from violence and exploitation. Goal Area 4 focuses on the impact of the environment on children's survival and development. And Goal Area 5 aims to address the key dimensions of inequity that prevent children from realizing their rights.

28. In addition to the Goal Areas, the Strategic Plan includes a learning agenda on some of the key emerging issues facing girls and boys. Adolescent suicide, mental health, road safety and child online safety are examples of areas where UNICEF will work with partners to learn more about what produces brings about results for girls and boys and develop appropriate and scalable models for response.

Goal Areas

29. **Goal Area 1** aims to ensure that every child survives and thrives. It supports the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 2, 3 and 5 in both humanitarian and development contexts; and supports articles 6 and 24 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

30. More than 40 per cent of children under five are at risk of not reaching their physical, cognitive, psychological and/or social and emotional potential due to poverty or poor health and nutrition, including poor care and nurturing practices. The underlying causes include weak delivery systems, unsafe environments and protracted humanitarian crises.

31. Infectious diseases such as pneumonia, diarrhoea and malaria remain the leading causes of death among children under five, with neonatal mortality accounting for a growing proportion of deaths among this age group. Disasters, conflict and epidemics exacerbate this situation due to disruption of access to functioning of essential health services, and increased exposure to health risks for affected populations.

32. Malnutrition is an underlying factor in approximately half of under-five deaths globally, resulting in about 3 million preventable child deaths each year. Malnutrition hinders a child's development, often with lifelong consequences. Currently an estimated 4 million children with severe acute malnutrition are living in countries affected by humanitarian crises.

33. Poor maternal health and care continue to undermine the well-being and rights of women and adolescent girls while also weakening children's chances of surviving and thriving.

34. The HIV epidemic continues to have a disproportionate impact on children. Children under five living with HIV face the highest risk of AIDS-related death. AIDS also remains a leading cause of death among adolescents, with strong gender

dimensions. New HIV infections among adolescents — two thirds of whom are among girls — are projected to rise from 250,000 in 2015 to nearly 400,000 annually by 2030 if progress in reaching adolescents is not sustained.

35. In this context, UNICEF, working with other United Nations entities and other partners, will contribute to the Sustainable Development Goal targets on maternal, neonatal and under-five mortality; HIV and AIDS; and stunting and other forms of malnutrition, while promoting early childhood development and gender-responsive adolescent health and nutrition.

36. UNICEF will support Governments to identify and address bottlenecks to the availability and use of quality health, nutrition, HIV and early childhood services. Actions will include systems strengthening, especially at the subnational and community level to address key illnesses, including diarrhoea, pneumonia, malaria and tuberculosis; enhancing the quality of care; strengthening communication for development; improving procurement and distribution systems and influencing markets; improving gender analysis; and better coordination with the delivery of water and sanitation services (Goal Area 4) and social protection (Goal Area 5). UNICEF will also support the research and development of vaccines and medicines for childhood diseases. No child should be left behind — UNICEF will work ambitiously towards the realization of universal health coverage for all children.

37. UNICEF will also work with other United Nations entities and other partners to strengthen preparedness for public health emergencies.

38. In humanitarian response, UNICEF will support scaled up nutrition assessments and surveillance, management of severe acute malnutrition and infant and young child feeding support; as well as scaled up life-saving interventions through population- and community-based services. UNICEF will also support scaled up efforts that integrate GBV prevention and risk mitigation in nutrition and health programmes. UNICEF will support and advocate with partners for measures in line with international humanitarian law to ensure that children and their families are not denied access to food and essential health-care services, and to prevent the destruction or damage of critical civilian infrastructure such as hospitals.

39. **Goal Area 2** aims to ensure that every child learns. Education is a right enshrined in articles 28 and 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It is also a driver of equity, poverty reduction, empowerment, peaceful and inclusive societies and economic growth. Educating girls is particularly transformative: evidence shows schooling for girls, especially at the secondary level, opens lifelong opportunities for them. Goal Area 2 therefore supports the achievement of multiple Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goals 4 and 5, in both humanitarian and development contexts.

40. Globally, more than half of preschool-aged children, 61 million primary-school-aged children and 60 million lower-secondary-school-aged adolescents and 142 million upper secondary school-aged adolescents lack access to learning opportunities. This includes children living in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, who account for more than half of out-of-school children.

41. Despite progress, girls are still more likely to be out of primary school than boys. Moreover, in countries affected by conflict, girls are 2.5 times more likely to be out of school than boys. Progress towards education for all is limited in part due to the exclusion of the poorest and other vulnerable groups, including children with disabilities and children belonging to minorities.

42. By itself, however, access to education is not enough to guarantee that a child learns. Globally, an estimated 250 million children in primary school are not learning the basics of reading and mathematics. There are also large learning gaps within and

between countries. Weak education system capacity and protracted crises are common underlying causes among countries that have been unable to meet children's learning needs.

43. Working with partners, UNICEF will emphasize strengthening education systems to ensure that schooling translates into learning outcomes, especially for the most marginalized children, and that systems are backed by resources to respond to the risk of disaster, conflict and other shocks. UNICEF will seek to increase opportunities for the most marginalized boys and girls, from early learning to upper secondary, including supporting the provision of non-formal and accelerated learning for those children already left behind.

44. UNICEF will also focus on improving systems that develop the skills of girls and boys throughout childhood, including adolescence, to promote equitable learning, personal empowerment, active citizenship, non-violence, gender equality and employability, both in and out of schools. No child should be left behind. More needs to be done for girls, in particular to improve safety and eliminate sexual- and gender-based violence and abuse.

45. In humanitarian situations, UNICEF will work to ensure continued access to learning programmes for affected children. In addition to supporting the provision of safe and secure learning environments, UNICEF will support life skills development for children and youth, including psychosocial support. UNICEF will also advocate and engage with relevant partners for measures in line with international humanitarian law to ensure the protection of children and educators as well as prevent the destruction or damage of schools.

46. **Goal Area 3** seeks to ensure that every girl and boy is protected from violence and exploitation, in both humanitarian and development contexts. This includes all forms of violence, including gender-based violence (GBV), sexual exploitation and abuse. The duty to protect children from violence and exploitation is enshrined in numerous articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including articles 19, and 34 to 38. Goal Area 3 supports the achievement of multiple Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goals 5, 8 and 16.

47. Global estimates point to hundreds of millions of girls and boys experiencing some form of violence, exploitation, or harmful practice. One in 10 girls under the age of 20 has experienced forced intercourse, rape, or other sexual acts. Boys are also at risk of sexual violence. Almost 750 million girls and women were married as children, and at least 200 million girls and women have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting. Hundreds of thousands of refugee and migrant children are at grave risk of violence, exploitation and abuse, including trafficking and smuggling. In addition, at least 2.7 million children, many of them children with disabilities, live in residential care.

48. In emergencies, additional child protection interventions are necessary to address heightened vulnerabilities due to the protection risks that humanitarian crises exacerbate and the new protection risks that emerge. This is particularly the case for displaced children; children who are unaccompanied, separated or orphaned; children and women at risk of, or directly affected by GBV; children living in areas affected by armed conflict; children with disabilities; and children belonging to minorities.

49. Gender-based violence is one of the most pervasive violations of human rights across the world. Conflict situations, disasters and displacement can intensify the various forms of GBV that girls and women are subjected to even in times of peace. Limited availability of formal protection and justice systems and separation of families and communities combine to increase the risk of GBV and diminish possibilities for treatment, healing and recovery. The increasing scale of people

affected by humanitarian crises requires UNICEF to step up its response to GBV in emergencies.

50. Working with other United Nations entities and partners, UNICEF will seek to protect children from violence and exploitation, focusing on reducing violence, eliminating harmful practices against girls, reducing exploitation and enhancing children's access to justice.

51. UNICEF will focus on the specific protection needs of girls and boys and their best interests, and on strengthening the protective environment through critical investments in national systems, community dialogue and behaviour change. In particular, UNICEF will support Governments to strengthen and expand their social services infrastructure and case management systems, and will work with communities to increase their capacity to protect children.

52. Building on the principle of state accountability, UNICEF will support capacity development programmes for justice and administrative bodies as well as civil registration systems. The objective is to make sure that child victims, witnesses or perpetrators seeking to access justice, and/or participating in criminal, civil and administrative justice processes, are treated in accordance with international standards. UNICEF will also advocate for policy and legislative changes, and will support capacity development of national human rights institutions to facilitate access to child-friendly remedies.

53. In humanitarian situations, UNICEF will support community-based approaches to the provision of psychosocial support to girls, boys and women experiencing GBV, including by providing safe spaces. UNICEF will also work to prevent family separation and support reunification of unaccompanied and separated children, strive to prevent child recruitment, support the release and reintegration of girls and boys associated with armed forces and groups, and continue to support programmes for prevention and provision of survivor assistance to children affected by landmines and explosive arms. UNICEF will seek gender-responsive protection for children exposed to grave violations in situations of armed conflict, and scale up support services to survivors. Approaches to results-based management will integrate analysis of risks to children and women related to disaster, conflict, climate change and other shocks, and strengthen coherence and complementarity between development and humanitarian programming. Streamlining of business processes with other United Nations entities will continue.

54. UNICEF will continue to advocate with all parties to a conflict to comply with international humanitarian law and human rights standards and support the monitoring and provision of timely and appropriate advocacy and programme responses to, child rights violations.

55. **Goal Area 4** prioritizes a safe and clean environment for children, a right enshrined in article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. This Goal Area contributes to Sustainable Development Goals 6, 11, 13 and 16.

56. Access to safe water, improved sanitation and proper hygiene is vital to the well-being of girls and boys. It contributes to good health and nutrition (Goal Area 1), quality learning (Goal Area 2), and dignity, especially for women and girls.

57. There have been significant advances in expanding access to improved water and sanitation in recent decades. However, an estimated 2.4 billion people still lack access to improved sanitation and 663 million people lack access to improved drinking water sources. Half a billion women and girls do not have access to adequate menstrual hygiene management. In humanitarian situations, access to safe water and sanitation is often interrupted and eroded, including as a strategy of war or a consequence of hostilities.

58. Millions of children around the world are also affected by conflict and fragility, climate change, natural hazards and air pollution. A safe and clean environment for children is more important than ever.

59. Today, more than half of the world's children live in cities, including many in urban slums. It is imperative that city planning is responsive to the rights of women, girls and boys.

60. Some 28 per cent of the world's children live in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, a figure projected to increase to one third by 2030. Climate change and natural disasters also pose grave risks to children and their caregivers, most of whom are women: more than half a billion children live in areas with an extremely high flood risk, and nearly 160 million children live in high, or extremely high, drought severity zones.

61. To address the challenges related to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), UNICEF will continue to work with partners to strengthen national systems, with particular attention to gender considerations. UNICEF will also support initiatives for WASH in schools and health centres, taking into account the specific needs of women, girls and children living with disabilities. UNICEF will support efforts to scale-up programmes and services that improve menstrual hygiene management for adolescent girls. Complementary efforts will focus on community platforms to address behavioural and social barriers.

62. In humanitarian situations, UNICEF will provide life-saving access to safe water and will support gender-responsive hygiene and sanitation. Within its mandate, UNICEF will also support and advocate with partners for measures that prevent denial of access to water and sanitation services to children and their families as well as their destruction or damage.

63. UNICEF will work with United Nations entities to support countries to develop or strengthen policies and programmes related to climate change, disaster risk reduction and peacebuilding so they are responsive to the needs of women and children, and will strengthen the coherence and complementarity between humanitarian and development programming by supporting systems to better prepare for, respond to and recover from shocks and stresses.

64. In cities, UNICEF will support the expansion of essential services to the poorest urban communities; work with local authorities to make city planning child-responsive; and strengthen the evidence base on equity gaps among children.

65. **Goal Area 5** underpins other Goal Areas by addressing some of the key dimensions of inequity that prevent children from realizing their rights. It supports the achievement of several Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goals 1, 5 and 10; and supports numerous articles such as 2, 23, 26 and 30 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

66. Much of the deprivation experienced by the most disadvantaged children is as a result of living in poverty, their being girls or young women, children with disabilities, or children belonging to minorities.

67. Poverty has lifelong consequences for children. Children are two times more likely than adults to be living in poverty, and a child living in poverty is also more likely to grow into an adult living in poverty. Gender inequality perpetuates poverty.

68. Through collaboration with other United Nations entities and other partners, UNICEF will support Governments to routinely measure and report on multidimensional child poverty. It will also support the adoption of national plans and budgets to address child poverty. UNICEF will continue working to expand cash transfers, especially to mothers, for the benefit of the most disadvantaged children,

and to strengthen national social protection systems, including preparedness for scaled up responses in the event of humanitarian crises.

69. The organization's priorities for Goal Area 5 also include addressing inequitable roles and practices among girls and boys; enhancing support for children with disabilities; reducing multidimensional child poverty; strengthening social protection for children and promoting adolescent empowerment.

70. To promote gender equality, UNICEF will seek to address discriminatory policies as well as the socialization processes and narratives that define gendered roles and practices, supporting girls and boys from early childhood through adolescence to adopt and shape more equitable gender norms and behaviours. Initiatives will include parenting and early childhood programmes, community engagement, adolescent participation and engagement; gender-responsive training for frontline workers, including as part of preparedness for humanitarian response; and support for legal and policy change.

71. Children with disabilities are among the most marginalized of all children. They are less likely to attend school, access medical services, or have their voices heard. In humanitarian situations, children with disabilities face increased risk of violence, and they are often excluded from receiving humanitarian assistance.

72. UNICEF will continue supporting countries in addressing the many barriers that impede results for girls and boys with disabilities, with the aim of providing inclusive services. Furthermore, UNICEF will continue to invest in the generation and use of data on children with disabilities.

73. Adolescence is a crucial developmental period that profoundly influences the life trajectories of girls and boys in dramatically different ways. While adolescents have the potential to become powerful agents of positive change, too often their specific needs are not prioritized.

74. To promote their empowerment, UNICEF will support national policies and service delivery systems that are responsive to the needs of adolescent girls and boys. It will promote platforms for the systematic participation of adolescents in decisions that affect their lives, and will support programmes that nurture them as informed social actors and enhance their civic engagement.

75. UNICEF will continue to promote the rights of children belonging to minorities to equal access to social services and to a life free from discrimination. Actions will include the use of data and evidence to highlight issues affecting minority children; support for the implementation of recommendations made by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; and strengthening of systems for monitoring child rights.

76. In humanitarian situations, UNICEF will support cash transfer programmes to help families to gain access to goods and services in a dignified manner, and to strengthen national social protection systems. UNICEF will also focus on addressing exclusion through support for a gender-responsive front-line response and providing a combination of services that are disability inclusive. Support will be provided to country offices and partners to strengthen data on programme performance, community engagement and accountability mechanisms.

77. UNICEF is committed to making sure that the rights of all children are fulfilled, everywhere. The success of the Strategic Plan will be assessed by whether the children who are the most left behind benefit from the results achieved. Details of the groups of children who will be reached in diverse contexts are outlined in the results framework of the Strategic Plan.

III. Cross-cutting priorities

Humanitarian action

78. Principled humanitarian action and delivery against the UNCEF Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action are essential parts of the UNICEF mandate. Protecting children in humanitarian situations while addressing their needs and vulnerabilities is essential to ensuring progress towards the 2030 Agenda. It also has a greater impact where it enhances humanitarian investments that contribute to longer-term development outcomes and accelerates resilient development.

79. In accordance with its mandate, the focus of UNICEF will be the delivery of faster, more effective and at-scale humanitarian response in line with the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, including adaptations for an effective response to health emergencies and during mass population displacements and protracted crises. This will include a renewed emphasis on increasing the reach and quality of humanitarian assistance; on recognizing the profoundly different and gendered impacts that crises have on women and men, girls and boys; and on ensuring the centrality of protection, with particular attention to grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict.

80. System strengthening efforts will include support to national coordination, effective strategies and capacities for rapid scale-up of life-saving and protection services in humanitarian situations. The humanitarian response will more systematically include community engagement and accountability to affected people and communities, including through communication for development and platforms for adolescent participation. The UNICEF response will, wherever possible, engage and support national and local first responders.

81. UNICEF will further strengthen its humanitarian action through enhanced risk-informed programming, including investments in key preparedness actions, national and subnational risk assessments, and advocacy for risk reduction strategies in development plans and sector policies to contribute to social cohesion and peaceful societies. The UNICEF response will support coordinated needs assessments and inter-agency humanitarian response strategies and planning, including through cluster coordination mechanisms. It will strengthen coherence and complementarity between humanitarian and development programming not only to better respond to immediate needs, but also contribute to collective outcomes with the aim of reducing needs, vulnerabilities and risks over multiple years.

82. UNICEF business processes will support more coherent results-based management across development and humanitarian programming, and greater transparency and application of the International Aid Transparency Initiative standards to humanitarian reporting as well as harmonized and streamlined processes with implementing partners.

83. UNICEF will also work with other United Nations entities and other partners to support more agile data-collection methods and systems and joint analyses appropriate to fragile and humanitarian situations.

84. An illustrative summary of Strategic Plan humanitarian targets is annexed to the results framework.

Gender equality

85. The organizational focus on equity recognizes the criticality of equality between girls and boys, and the intimate link between the welfare and rights of women and that

of children; a tremendous evidence base shows that the well-being of children is most often predicated on women's survival, protection and opportunity.

86. Important progress has been made in promoting gender equality worldwide, yet much remains to be done. In many countries, girls continue to be less valued than boys and have fewer opportunities to survive and thrive.

87. Fragile, conflict-affected and disaster-prone contexts may further exacerbate gender inequality and the disproportionate burden and responsibilities women face in supporting and protecting children.

88. Building on the Gender Action Plan, 2014-2017, as well as system-wide efforts to promote gender equality, gender results are integrated into each of the five Goal Areas of the Strategic Plan. These results include quality maternal care; menstrual hygiene management; nutrition for women and girls; equitable learning and skills for girls and boys; reducing child marriage; and transforming gender discriminatory roles and practices. In addition to gender-equitable outcomes, the Strategic Plan places strong emphasis on addressing some of the key barriers to the empowerment of adolescent girls. Engaging men and boys as a part of the change is critical for addressing the root causes of gender-based discrimination and transforming social norms.

89. There is a strong focus on mainstreaming gender analysis in programme design and delivery, strengthening the collection and utilization of disaggregated data, forging partnerships, building capacity, achieving gender parity in staffing, and effectively using resources. Gender equality results and strategies are further elaborated in the Gender Action Plan, 2018-2021. UNICEF and the other United Nations entities have also proposed common indicators for coordinated action in support of gender equality.

IV. Change strategies

90. This Strategic Plan outlines the change strategies (the HOW) for the achievement of results under the five Goal Areas. With human rights principles and standards at the core of its activities, UNICEF delivers change by combining high-quality programmes at scale, harnessing innovation and collecting evidence, in partnership with Governments, other United Nations partners, civil society, the private sector, communities and children. It uses these to leverage wider change nationally and globally through advocacy, communications and campaigning. UNICEF also builds public support around the world to volunteer, advocate and mobilize resources for the cause of children, and works with partners to achieve an even greater impact. The key change strategies UNICEF will focus on during 2018-2021 include:

91. **Programming for at-scale results for children**. UNICEF will foster cross-sectoral and multisectoral programming that provides a holistic and rights-based response to children and to the environment in which they live. UNICEF will support policy, capacity development and systems strengthening at national and subnational levels to improve the delivery of essential services to the most disadvantaged children, including coordination and rapid scale up of life-saving and protection services in humanitarian situations, and strengthening social protection systems to be ready to scale up cash transfers in emergencies. On the basis of evidence, UNICEF will also focus on scaling up programming to support behaviour change and community engagement, including in humanitarian situations. UNICEF will enhance coherence and connectedness between at-scale capacity for humanitarian action and longer-term programming, including support to common needs assessment and analysis of risks related to disaster, conflict, climate change and other shocks, and corresponding risk-informed programming with partners. These complementary approaches will support

the coherence between humanitarian and development programming. Promoting cooperation, sharing lessons learned and fostering innovation and partnerships through South-South and triangular cooperation will also be emphasized.

92. **Gender-responsive programming** in all contexts. In order to foster high quality, gender-responsive programme design, implementation and monitoring, UNICEF will continue improvement and standardization of tools, technical assistance, capacity-building and guidance for country offices to undertake a robust gender analysis and to prioritize evidence-based, effective change strategies that are most suited to the organization's comparative advantage. These strategies are further elaborated in the Gender Action Plan, 2018-2021.

93. **Winning support for the cause of children from decision makers and the wider public**. UNICEF will become an even stronger advocacy, campaigning, fundraising and communications force for children, working with others to build alliances and movements for change. Through this public engagement, the organization will make progress towards recruiting 100 million supporters to the cause of children, to volunteer, advocate and give. This strategy also includes strengthening the UNICEF brand, and supporting young people and children as agents of change.

94. **Developing and leveraging resources and partnerships for children**. UNICEF will advocate for domestic financing and budgeting for programmes that benefit children. It will also maintain a strong focus on mobilizing resources from Governments and the private sector — including individuals, foundations and corporations — to maximize longer-term, flexible and predictable funds in support of UNICEF programmes and advocacy for children, including for preparedness and humanitarian action. The rationale for an increased focus on resource mobilization is a reflection of the ambition of the 2030 Agenda, growing demand from host Governments to collaborate on interventions at scale that can deliver the transformative change envisioned in the Sustainable Development Goals, and the need to respond to the continued frequency and complexity of humanitarian crises.

95. In support of the 2030 Agenda, UNICEF will continue to strengthen partnerships with Governments for at-scale results for girls and boys. Collaboration with civil society partners will be increased, including continued engagement with non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, foundations and academic institutions, to advocate and act on behalf of children. Strategic and operational partnerships will be enhanced with international financial institutions, including the World Bank and the regional development banks. UNICEF will also expand its collaboration with the business community to leverage their core assets on behalf of children.

96. There has been strong growth in revenue over 2014-2017 period with actual revenue 21 per cent higher than the amount planned during the mid-term review. An in-depth analysis of global public and private sector resource mobilization trends has identified areas for additional growth, particularly through an increase in the recruitment and retention of monthly pledge donors and enhanced focus on legacy, corporate and foundation fundraising opportunities. This will be underpinned by the ability of UNICEF to demonstrate results and value for money. Total income for 2018-2021 is projected to be $22.8 billion, out of which $16.5 billion will be other resources, and $6.3 billion will be regular resources, which are projected to increase at a faster pace, driven mainly by increases from the private sector. Resources will be directed to the areas of greatest need, making sure that no child is left behind. The integrated resource plan and integrated results and resources framework that support the Strategic Plan are presented in tables 1 and 2 that follow.

97. **Harnessing the power of business and markets for children**. At both global and country levels, UNICEF will continue to leverage the power of private sector

partners to improve the lives of children around the world, harnessing their core business and innovation, and advocating for them to uphold child rights. UNICEF will continue to influence global and local markets for children, including pursuing a research and development pipeline of vaccines, medicines and technologies for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal targets. This will require attention to reducing market barriers that inhibit access to essential supplies for children.

98. **United Nations working together**. In alignment with the 2016 QCPR, UNICEF will work with other United Nations entities to strengthen system coherence and to introduce more integrated approaches with a view to achieving better results for children and the 2030 Agenda. Efforts will focus on: promoting UNDAFs that are more strategic, anchored in human rights standards and principles, aligned with national priorities, and based on common needs assessments and common analysis; enhancing the quality and depth of engagement in country-level results groups; leading or co-leading groups within relevant areas of strategic focus and comparative advantage; and implementing the standard operating procedures for Delivering as One.

99. UNICEF will also collaborate with United Nations development system partners to develop system-wide actions for cross-cutting issues such as the reduction of poverty and inequality; gender equality and empowerment of women and girls; adolescent and maternal health and HIV; coherence and complementarity between humanitarian and development programming; climate change; and disaggregated data for sustainable development. Common indicators will help to track actions by the four entities in support of these six areas. UNICEF will rely on strong partnerships with members of the United Nations family and others to achieve lasting results for children in these areas and others highlighted in the results framework. Key United Nations partners are listed against each Goal Area in the results framework.

100. The common indicators will also be pursued at the country level through UNDAFs or related instruments, including humanitarian response plans.

101. In humanitarian situations, UNICEF will continue its support to humanitarian country teams to deliver results for children and their families. UNICEF will continue to invest in its role as cluster lead agency for nutrition, WASH, and co-lead for education and for the child protection area of responsibility, as well as host of the secretariat for the communication and community engagement initiative. UNICEF will also continue to strengthen partnerships with national and first responders as well as support their engagement in cluster coordination mechanisms.

102. In addition to its collaborative work with UNDP, UNFPA and UN-Women to achieve results under the Strategic Plan, UNICEF will rely on strong partnerships with other members of the United Nations family, including: the Department of Economic and Social Affairs; the Department of Peacekeeping Operations; the Department of Political Affairs; the International Labour Organization; the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS; the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict; the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict; the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; the World Food Programme; and the World Health Organization.

103. **Fostering innovation for children**. This will include enhancing the use of technologies to better engage communities and enhance social accountability, including in humanitarian action. This change strategy will also involve identifying the most promising programme innovations for different contexts while supporting partners to adopt, adapt and scale up the most successful approaches.

104. **Harnessing the power of evidence as a driver of change for children.** Evaluations, research and data are key elements of sound programming, advocacy and leveraging partnerships for children. Identifying the most marginalized groups is a prerequisite for leaving no child behind. There will be a strong focus on research, policy analysis and evaluation of what works for children, and an emphasis on the collection, analysis and utilization of data, including in fragile situations. UNICEF will work with partners to fill data gaps as well as increase availability of disaggregated data on the 37 child-focused Sustainable Development Goal indicators.

V. Operational effectiveness and efficiency

105. The Strategic Plan sets out measures to improve the internal effectiveness and efficiency of UNICEF (the ENABLERS). The enablers support the delivery of results and change strategies and comprise four interconnected elements:

(a) internal governance;

(b) management;

(c) staff capacity; and

(d) knowledge and information systems.

106. **Enhancing internal governance in support of the universal mandate of UNICEF.** In support of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the 2030 Agenda, the UNICEF business model is to partner with the public and private sectors, United Nations entities, civil society organizations and citizens to support the fulfilment of the rights of children, everywhere, especially the most-disadvantaged, including in humanitarian situations. UNICEF will continue to be guided by the Executive Board on the most appropriate type of engagement in a given context. UNICEF will continue to invest the majority of its resources in least developed countries while working in other contexts in support of national priorities and in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The trend shows that support for service-delivery is largely centred in the least developed countries as well as countries in humanitarian situations. Yet, even in such contexts UNICEF continues to engage in at-scale systems strengthening, policy development and normative work, thereby providing a full range of support. In middle-income countries, at-scale systems strengthening, policy development and normative work, backed by modelling of programmes that work for children dominate the work of UNICEF. In high-income countries, UNICEF will continue to be guided by Executive Board decision 2016/11 on the most appropriate type of engagement.

107. UNICEF will manage emerging risks to programmes and operations through an updated enterprise risk management (ERM) framework that enables managers to use a single, comprehensive methodology. An updated ERM policy will be implemented in 2018 to support well-managed risk-taking and mitigating strategies.

108. Risks will also be managed by the organization being even more transparent. UNICEF will build on its current solid ranking in the Aid Transparency Index by providing more frequent data on results and resources, including application of transparency standards to humanitarian reporting.

109. Furthermore, UNICEF will introduce an anti-fraud strategy articulating measures to strengthen deterrence, prevention and detection of fraud, including risks related to implementing partners and contractors. It will also identify an enhanced pathway for remedial action and recovery of losses.

110. Further efforts will be made to mainstream value-for-money considerations related to programmes and management, including from the inception of programme development to implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

111. **Oversight functions** will receive increased attention. A strengthened internal audit function will bolster the adequacy and effectiveness of the system of internal controls and its recommendations will strengthen the organization's risk management. The evaluation function will continue to support the organization's work across all areas. The Evaluation Policy will be revised following an external peer review in 2017, and will focus on improving the quality and use of evaluations, especially at the country level. UNICEF will achieve the target of a minimum of 1 per cent of programme expenditures devoted to evaluations within the Strategic Plan period.

112. UNICEF is committed to making its offices accessible and inclusive for all, and is also working to improve the eco-efficiency of its operations, including in humanitarian settings.

113. **Enhancing management efficiency and effectiveness**: Building on previous work, UNICEF will continue to enhance the skills of staff and partners in results-based management, including the design and delivery of country programmes. Programme monitoring and reporting will be reinforced through new tools and near-real-time learning. Implementation of recently introduced guidance to country offices on the development of programme strategies and theories of change will be sustained. UNICEF will also strengthen results-based budgeting through the adoption of a new budget formulation tool.

114. UNICEF will strengthen its Global Shared Services Centre for the enhanced delivery of efficient services. Through vertical integration and economies of scale, UNICEF will achieve cost savings and further reduce processing time for country offices.

115. With other United Nations entities, UNICEF will pursue horizontal integration through a business operations strategy that aims to simplify and harmonize business processes and consolidate administrative support services. Particular emphasis will be placed on enhanced quality of services, collaborative procurement and common premises.

116. **Strengthening staff capacity**: Flexible approaches to the deployment of staff will be pursued. A versatile and mobile staff, supported by advances in information and communications technology (ICT), will expand the reach of UNICEF actions. This will include adopting non-traditional operating modalities, such as assigning staff to work remotely, or in regional hubs. These will also further enhance gender equality in the workplace.

117. UNICEF will continue to support staff at all levels through processes and systems aimed at: (a) ensuring the right people are in the right place at the right time; (b) providing clarity on what is expected of staff, and ensuring they are equipped to deliver on those expectations; (c) fostering a culture of continuous learning as well as professional and personal growth; (d) strengthening skills for strategic engagement with new partnerships, including foundations, development banks and the private sector; and (e) maintaining staff motivation and engagement, and an environment that allows everyone to contribute to their full potential.

118. Given the need for increasingly flexible options for deployment, staff must be able to meet new challenges wherever they occur, with a wide range of technical capabilities, core skills and knowledge.

119. UNICEF will continue to evaluate the performance of each individual, the organization will also increasingly focus on assessing and recognizing office-level contributions to results.

120. In line with the QCPR, UNICEF will continue its efforts to achieve gender and geographic balance in appointments at all levels, with due regard to female candidates and nationals from programme countries. UNICEF will also enhance its overall capacity, expertise and learning on mainstreaming gender equality. Capacity-building programmes on gender-responsive programming will be rolled out to UNICEF staff and partners in both development and humanitarian contexts.

121. Enhancing knowledge and information systems for programme results and organizational efficiency and effectiveness: As UNICEF strengthens its position as a knowledge leader and advocate for children, it will require continued investment in knowledge-sharing and information management. This includes building digital engagement and fundraising platforms and leveraging social media to catalyse millions of volunteers for the cause of children.

122. To facilitate knowledge transfer and exchange, UNICEF will provide staff with the tools needed to support interactions and active collaboration with other United Nations system staff, partners and others, and will work to improve knowledge resources.

123. Governance of ICT will continue to be strengthened. Inefficiencies will be reduced by introducing new digital platforms, data sources and analytics that are integrated with existing systems. An overarching goal will be to provide connectivity and access to information and systems to all staff, regardless of their location or specific role.

124. In so doing, it will be critical to adhere to transparency principles and to deliver open source solutions to the greatest extent possible. This will entail increasing awareness around information and cybersecurity, and ensuring a solid enterprise architecture of core information systems that can harbour safe data for UNICEF as well as its partners and beneficiaries, while ensuring institutional resilience and business continuity. The UNICEF response in emergencies will also expand from providing core telecommunications and Internet access to including information management and use of geospatial technologies.

VI. Risk management

125. In a changing world, an effective risk management framework that identifies and mitigates risk, while firmly oriented towards enabling the organization to deliver, is critical. UNICEF has identified several risks that have the potential to limit the full roll out of the Strategic Plan. These include: insufficient resources to implement an ambitious agenda towards achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals; increasing scale of recurring and new humanitarian crises; in many contexts, inadequate capacity of national partners for at-scale implementation of programmes; inadequate monitoring capacity, particularly in sudden and complex emergencies; uneven focus on results for children among United Nations partners working together; challenges with systems and procedures for United Nations partners working together; and challenges in results-based budgeting as part of the broader management for results agenda of UNICEF.

126. The change strategies and enablers discussed above are explicitly designed to help to mitigate these risks. Flexible funding will allow UNICEF and partners to leverage and commit resources where they are most needed. New resource partnerships, particularly through harnessing the power of business and markets, will

be key in this regard, and will also enable UNICEF to help to mitigate the risk of insufficient resources. Limited implementation and monitoring capacity among some partners can be overcome with an expanded agenda on systems strengthening by United Nations entities and key partners as well as with continued investment in systems to gather, analyse and disseminate evidence on what works for children. Stronger community engagement enabled by innovative technologies will further expand the capacity to implement and monitor programmes.

127. A mobile, versatile workforce, enabled by agile deployment arrangements, will also help to strengthen implementation capacity where it is most needed, including in sudden-onset emergencies, and flexibility in business operations will increase interoperability with key United Nations partners. Robust ICT systems will be essential to achieving this flexibility and to keeping pace with the risks and opportunities posed by rapidly evolving technology. They will also be vital for strong results-based management systems that ensure proper alignment of resources and results. The integrated results and resources framework and new budget formulation tool will also be key, as will the planned guidance on value for money. A more detailed discussion of the risks and mitigating strategies is described in a separate paper on the Theory of Change for the Strategic Plan.

VII. Monitoring and evaluation

128. The results framework will outline impact- and outcome-level indicators of the Strategic Plan, largely derived from the Sustainable Development Goals. Baselines, annual milestones and end-of-cycle targets for output indicators will help to track the UNICEF contribution to the Goals. Monitoring information from all levels of the organization will be made available to the public through the UNICEF Transparency Portal <http://open.unicef.org>. The annual report of the Executive Director to the Executive Board will continue to serve as the vehicle for reporting on progress towards the Strategic Plan, including the indicators listed by United Nations entities in the annex to the common chapter. The mid-term review of the Strategic Plan will provide opportunities for reflection and adjustment.

129. For purposes of monitoring the Strategic Plan, UNICEF will continue to strengthen its data and information systems, including expanding use of the organizational performance monitoring system (inSight) and the effective tracking of gender equality and humanitarian results. Improved knowledge-sharing platforms will facilitate the exchange of good practices across the organization and with United Nations partners and others. Internal guidance and the recently developed results-based management learning package will facilitate translation of the 2018-2021 Strategic Plan and Gender Action Plan into sector strategies and country programmes. Key results for the most deprived children will be tracked and reported with global partners through development of national monitoring systems in as a part of country programmes. All of these systems will help to strengthen the coherence and complementarity of development and humanitarian programmes.

130. UNICEF will also focus on enhancing the capacity of key systems at the country level, including information management and accountability systems, to provide more timely and better quality information for decision makers. In line with the QCPR, UNICEF will enhance evaluation capacity at country level and support the articulation of gender results through the UNCT scorecard. On the basis of broad consultations, UNICEF will design and implement a new plan for independent corporate evaluations, and will give increased attention to the sharing and uptake of evaluation evidence.

VIII. Conclusion

131. The world is changing faster than ever before, and so too are the threats, challenges and opportunities facing its children. Yet children's rights remain the same — immutable, indivisible, interrelated and universal. To meet these challenges and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, and using the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other human rights standards and principles as guiding tools, UNICEF, as well as its many partners, must be sufficiently nimble and adaptable to respond to these changing dynamics while remaining steadfast in its core mandate to promote the fulfilment of children's rights. The Goal Areas, change strategies and enablers outlined in this Strategic Plan position UNICEF to meet this challenge and to deliver lasting results for children, bringing the organization closer to realizing the vision of the 2030 Agenda, a world in which no child is left behind.

Annex

Table 1 — Integrated resource plan, 2018-2021

	Approved 2014-2017 Midterm Review (E/ICEF/2016/AB/L.2/Rev.1)							*2018-2021*						
	Regular resources		*Other resources*		*Total resources*		*Trust funds*	*Regular resources*		*Other resources*		*Total resources*		*Trust funds*
			Programme	*Cost recovery*						*Programme*	*Cost recovery*			
	$m	*%*	*$m*	*$m*	*$m*	*%*	*$m*	*$m*	*%*	*$m*	*$m*	*$m*	*%*	*$m*
1. Resources available														
Opening balance	575.3		1 853.1	–	2 428.4		586.0	562.3		1 235.9	–	1 798.2		727.0
Income														
Contributions	4 697.7		13 685.7	–	18 383.4		–	5 801.9		16 512.5	–	22 314.4		–
Other income and reimbursements	402.5		–	–	402.5		–	500.0		–	–	500.0		–
Total income	5 100.2		13 685.7	–	18 785.9		–	6 301.9		16 512.5	–	22 814.4		–
Tax reimbursement adjustment	(76.6)		–	–	(76.6)		–	(80.0)		–	–	(80.0)		–
Trust fund receipts			–	–	–		7 577.0			–	–	–		7 148.0
Total available	**5 598.9**		**15 538.8**	**–**	**21 137.7**		**8 163.0**	**6 784.1**		**17 748.4**	**–**	**24 532.6**		**7 875.0**
2. Use of resources														
A. Development														
A.1 Programmes	3 651.8	69.1%	13 429.1	–	17 080.9	86.0%	7 333.0	4 360.0	67.9%	15 917.3	–	20 277.3	84.6%	7 116.0
Country programmes	3 471.8	65.7%	12 900.6	–	16 372.4	82.5%	–	4 140.0	64.5%	15 107.1	–	19 247.1	80.3%	–
Global programme	180.0	3.4%	528.4	–	708.5	3.6%	–	220.0	3.4%	810.2	–	1 030.2	4.3%	–
A.2 Development effectiveness	467.4	8.8%	100.1	–	567.5	2.9%	–	589.0	9.2%	133.0	–	721.9	3.0%	–
Subtotal: Development	4 119.2	78.0%	13 529.2	–	17 648.4	88.9%	7 333.0	4 949.0	77.1%	16 050.3	–	20 999.3	87.6%	7 116.0
B. United Nations development coordination	20.3	0.4%	16.3	–	36.6	0.2%	–	23.3	0.4%	25.9	–	49.3	0.2%	–
C. Management	531.2	10.1%	–	904.2	1 435.4	7.2%		459.9	7.2%	6.4	1 138.0	1 604.3	6.7%	
D. Special purpose														
D.1 Capital investments	20.4	0.4%	–	34.6	55.0	0.3%	–	23.0	0.4%	–	57.0	80.0	0.3%	–

	Approved 2014-2017 Midterm Review (E/ICEF/2016/AB/L.2/Rev.1)							2018-2021						
	Regular resources		Other resources		Total resources		Trust funds	Regular resources		Other resources		Total resources		Trust funds
			Programme	Cost recovery						Programme	Cost recovery			
	$m	%	$m	$m	$m	%	$m	$m	%	$m	$m	$m	%	$m
D.2 Private fundraising and partnerships, direct/investment costs	410.6	7.8%	86.0	–	496.6	2.5%	–	725.1	11.3%	273.0	–	998.2	4.2%	–
D.3 Other	182.5	3.5%	–	–	182.5	0.9%	–	240.0	3.7%	–	–	240.0	1.0%	–
Subtotal: Special purpose	613.4	11.6%	86.0	34.6	734.1	3.7%	–	988.1	15.4%	273.0	57.0	1 318.2	5.5%	–
Total institutional budget (A.2 + B + C+ D.1)	**1 039.3**	**19.7%**	**116.4**	**938.8**	**2 094.5**	**10.5%**	**–**	**1 095.2**	**17.1%**	**165.3**	**1 195.0**	**2 455.5**	**10.2%**	**–**
Integrated budget (A + B + C + D)	**5 284.1**	**100.0%**	**13 631.5**	**938.8**	**19 854.4**	**100.0%**	**7 333.0**	**6 420.3**	**100.0%**	**16 355.6**	**1 195.0**	**23 971.0**	**100.0%**	**7 116.0**
3. Closing balance of resources	**314.7**		**968.5**		**1 283.3**		**830.0**	**363.8**		**197.8**		**561.6**		**759.0**

Table 2 — Integrated results and resources framework, 2018-2021

Goals	Functional cluster	2018-2021			
		Regular resources	Other resources		Total resources
			Programme	Cost recovery	
		$m	$m	$m	$m
Programmes		**4 360.0**	**15 917.3**		**20 277.3**
Goal Area 1 — Every child survives and thrives		1 744.0	6 366.9		8 110.9
Goal Area 2 — Every child learns		872.0	3 183.5		4 055.5
Goal Area 3 — Every child is protected from violence and exploitation		523.2	1 910.1		2 433.3
Goal Area 4 — Every child survives in a safe and clean environment		845.8	3 088.0		3 933.8
Goal Area 5 — Every child has an equitable chance in life		375.0	1 368.9		1 743.9
Organizational effectiveness and efficiency					
1	**Higher quality programmes through results-based management**	**589.0**	**133.0**		**721.9**
	Technical excellence in policy and programmes	500.2	124.2		624.3
	Technical excellence in procurement and management of supplies	53.5	8.8		62.3
	Technical excellence in humanitarian action	35.3			35.3
2	**Improved management of financial and human resources in pursuit of results**	**459.9**	**6.4**	**1 138.0**	**1 604.3**
	Leadership and corporate direction	10.7	1.9	26.5	39.1
	Corporate oversight and assurance	13.8		34.1	47.8
	Corporate financial, information, communications and technology, and administrative management	70.4	.6	174.1	245.1
	Staff and premises security	8.1		20.0	28.1
	Corporate external relations and partnerships, communication and resource mobilization	71.8		177.6	249.4
	Corporate human resources management	27.1	3.8	67.1	98.0
	Field/country office oversight, management and operations support	258.1		638.6	896.7
3	**Coordination of the United Nations Development System**	**23.3**	**25.9**		**49.3**
	United Nations coherence and cluster coordination	23.3	25.9		49.3
4	**Special purpose**	**988.1**	**273.0**	**57.0**	**1 318.2**
	Capital investment	23.0		57.0	80.0
	Private sector fundraising	725.1	273.0		998.2
	Other, including procurement services	240.0			240.0
Total resources		**6 420.3**	**16 355.6**	**1 195.0**	**23 971.0**

United Nations E/ICEF/2017/17/Rev.1

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
16 August 2017

Original: English

For decision

United Nations Children's Fund
Executive Board
Second regular session 2017
12-15 September 2017
Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018-2021

Summary

Seventy years after UNICEF was established, the organization's mission to promote the full attainment of the rights of all children is as urgent as ever.

The UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 is anchored in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and charts a course towards attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals and the realization of a future in which every child has a fair chance in life. It sets out measurable results for children, especially the most disadvantaged, including in humanitarian situations, and defines the change strategies and enablers that support their achievement.

Working together with Governments, United Nations partners, the private sector, civil society and with the full participation of children, UNICEF remains steadfast in its commitment to realize the rights of all children, everywhere, and to achieve the vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a world in which no child is left behind.

The Executive Board is requested to adopt the draft decision included in section IX.

* E/ICEF/2017/14.

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Working together to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda

Common chapter to the Strategic Plans of UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and UN-Women

Our commitment

As we set our strategic directions for the next four years, we — the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) — commit to working better together, characterized by stronger coherence and collaboration. We note with appreciation the United Nations Secretary-General's report on repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Together we will step up our joint efforts, with a sense of urgency, to better support countries to achieve sustainable development. In line with the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (QCPR), we will help shape a United Nations development system that responds to our changing world and works in increasingly effective ways to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals. Our strategic plans represent a clear commitment to United Nations reform and greater coherence in support of results.

Key areas of collaboration

The principles of *leaving no one behind* and *reaching the furthest behind first* permeate all four of our strategic plans. In direct response to the QCPR, we will harness our respective collaborative advantage in compliance with our respective mandates in these key areas:

(a) Eradicating poverty;

(b) Addressing climate change;

(c) Improving adolescent and maternal health;

(d) Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls;

(e) Ensuring greater availability and use of disaggregated data for sustainable development;

(f) Emphasizing that development is a central goal in itself, and that in countries in conflict and post-conflict situations the development work of the entities of the United Nations development system can contribute to peacebuilding and sustaining peace, in accordance with national plans, needs and priorities and respecting national ownership.

These areas of collaborative advantage have positive multiplier effects across the Sustainable Development Goals and require multisectoral approaches for which the diversity of the United Nations system is an asset. They also provide a basis for closer collaboration with other United Nations entities as well as other partners. As detailed in the annex to the common chapter of the strategic plans, our outputs will complementarily contribute to common results in these key areas, in accordance with our respective mandates and comparative advantages. The results will be tracked by the common Sustainable Development Goal indicators that are adopted at outcome or impact level in our respective strategic plans, including but not limited to the following:

(a) *Eradicating poverty*: SDG 1.1.1. Proportion of population below the international poverty line by sex, age, employment status and geographical location;

(b) *Eradicating poverty*: SDG 1.3.1. Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable;

(c) *Adolescent health and HIV*: SDG 3.3.1: Number of HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected population, by sex, age and key populations;

(d) *Gender equality*: SDG 5.2.1. Proportion of ever partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age;

(e) *Strengthening data for sustainable development*: SDG 17.18.1. Proportion of sustainable development indicators produced at the national level with full disaggregation when relevant to the target, in accordance with the fundamental principles of official statistics;

(f) *Prevention, resilience, climate change*: SDGs 1.5.1 and 11.5.1 and 13.1.1. Numbers of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population.

Strengthening how we work together

We will work together more effectively at all levels. Most importantly, our strategic plans reflect a change in how we work at country level, recognizing there is no "one size fits all", and fully affirming the primary responsibility of national Governments for their countries' development and for coordinating, on the basis of national strategies and priorities, all types of external assistance.

We will plan together. As part of United Nations country teams we will support national governments and partners to work towards common results and indicators, and collectively report on them through the revised United Nations Development Assistance Framework, as signed by national governments, to drive stronger efficiency and effectiveness. In a significant step forward, these common results will now be underpinned by a mandatory common country assessment from which theories of change can be drawn, and knowledge and expertise can be collaboratively used. This is an important improvement. During the 2030 Agenda era, the United Nations development system, at the country level, will support national priorities on the Sustainable Development Goals; share a common analysis of the issues; and plan, monitor and report on shared results. This increased programmatic collaboration will strengthen system-wide coherence at all levels as we draw data from joint analysis at country level. This change can be tracked through indicators including but not limited to: (a) percentage of entities meeting or exceeding the System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women minimum standards; and (b) percentage of country offices applying the standard operating procedures according to country context.

We will implement programmes together differently. We will continue to support field offices in developing joint programmes, joint results groups and joint workplans in support of country priorities. On financing, we commit to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development. We will work to leverage public finances, including official development assistance, and support the adoption of policies to increase resource flows for the benefit of partner countries. We will promote integrated partnerships, using the full range of financing tools in support of the Sustainable Development Goals. Building on experiences from

the common budgetary framework at country level, we are moving to jointly support financing strategies for the Sustainable Development Goals, including through innovative financing. These changes can be tracked through indicators including but not limited to: (a) percentage of country offices engaged in joint programmes; (b) thematic funding as a percentage of other resources; and (c) percentage of country offices that track and report on allocations and expenditures using gender markers.

We will enhance multi-stakeholder partnerships. Reflecting the people-centred nature of the 2030 Agenda, we will support innovative platforms that strengthen collaboration with Governments as well as with civil society and the private sector. We will build on recent progress in engaging citizens through volunteerism, empowerment, participation and other means to strengthen national ownership and capacity, and delivery of the sustainable development agenda. We will also intensify collaboration through multi-stakeholder partnerships at national, regional and global levels, and assist in improving mutual accountability for the Sustainable Development Goals in such partnerships. These changes can be tracked through indicators including but not limited to: (a) percentage of total resources from contributions by donors other than the top 15; and (b) percentage share of total funding coming from private sector partners.

We will enhance efficiency together. Underpinning the drive for ever-greater effectiveness and building on progress made in recent years through the standard operating procedures, we will continue to accelerate efficiency gains through business operations strategies, mutual recognition, and broader operational harmonization. These changes can be tracked through indicators including, but not limited, to the percentage of country offices implementing a business operations strategy.

All of the Sustainable Development Goal and QCPR-based indicators presented in this common chapter and in the annex to the common chapter are a subset of a much larger number of indicators shared by two or more entities that can be identified in the results frameworks of the respective strategic plans. We will report on all common indicators through the annual reports on the implementation of our respective strategic plans.

Looking forward

While fully recognizing that the findings and recommendations of the Secretary-General's report on repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda will be discussed by Member States, we will continue to fully support the process steered by the Secretary-General and retain the flexibility to respond accordingly to the decisions of Member States through the midterm reviews of the strategic plans.

I. Overview

A. Context of global opportunities and challenges

1. The world has made considerable progress towards realizing the rights of children in the past two and a half decades. The number of children who die before their fifth birthday declined from 12.7 million in 1990 to 5.9 million in 2015. The primary school net enrolment rate in low- and middle-income countries reached 91 per cent in 2015, up from 83 per cent a decade and a half earlier, and gender parity in primary education continues to improve. These are but a few examples of the many advances made for children.

2. Yet, while much has been achieved, many of the world's most disadvantaged girls and boys have not benefited from this progress. Even in countries in which national targets were achieved, they masked glaring inequities within those same countries. Compared to children in the highest income group, the poorest children are nearly twice as likely to die before the age of 5, twice as likely to be stunted, and five times more likely to be out of school. Some 32 million girls are still out of primary school as compared to 29 million boys, with adolescent girls more likely to be illiterate than adolescent boys.

3. The Strategic Plan has been prepared at a time of immense challenges. Conflict and civil strife, natural disasters and climate change, and global epidemics, compounded by other major and often linked trends such as rapid urbanization and mass population movements, all threaten the prospects of leaving no child behind. Rapid demographic shifts and the growing youth bulge in Africa and parts of Asia will bring opportunities to achieve demographic dividends. This will, in turn, depend on reducing equity gaps among children in these continents through scaling up of essential services for the most disadvantaged children and equal opportunities for girls and boys.

4. **Humanitarian response** will potentially continue to be a growing feature of the organization's work. Children in fragile contexts are twice as likely to die before the age of 5, or to be out of school. Girls, in particular, are likely to experience sexual violence and to be at increased risk of harmful practices such as child marriage. Approximately 28 million children have been uprooted by violence and conflict.

5. Despite these challenges, numerous opportunities exist to accelerate progress for children. The 2030 Agenda puts children at the core of the global agenda. In addition to Governments, the private sector is playing an increasingly active role in development. Social media is empowering citizens to exercise their voices, and civil society is helping to expand opportunities for children.

6. Considerable evidence also exists about what works to deliver results for children, and what must change in order to accelerate progress. Starting with the most deprived children is not only right in principle, it is also cost-effective and practical. A focus on children's rights will help the world move more swiftly towards the progressive realization of the targets of the 2030 Agenda.

7. The Strategic Plan therefore reflects the principles of the 2030 Agenda, including the pledge to *leave no one and no child behind* and *to reach the farthest behind first*.

B. Building on the lessons from the previous Strategic Plan

8. Key lessons have emerged over the period of the previous Strategic Plan, 2014-2017.[1]

9. Among these are the need for UNICEF to intensify the strengthening of national systems to assist the most disadvantaged girls and boys. There is a need to scale up equity-focused programming and advocacy, including by focusing interventions on the most disadvantaged children. Increased investment in disaggregated data will greatly improve the monitoring of inequality and discrimination prohibited by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities..

10. Evaluations have also underscored the importance of intensifying community engagement and social mobilization for addressing the demand-related barriers to the fulfilment of child rights.

11. In promoting accountability for child rights, UNICEF should intensify support for inclusive and meaningful participation of children in decisions that affect them, and to ensure that the best interests of the child remain a primary consideration in all actions concerning children.

12. In light of the scale, frequency and complexity of humanitarian crises, risk-informed programming and systems strengthening have become vital for prevention, response and early recovery. Evaluations have highlighted that risk analysis (including analysis of the underlying causes of crises and the different vulnerabilities and risk exposures of affected populations), emergency preparedness, and enhancing humanitarian investments that contribute to longer-term development outcomes, as a key means of strengthening the coherence and complementarity between humanitarian and development programming.

13. Experience across all regions confirms the importance of integrated approaches that address the underlying causes of child rights violations. For example, in protecting girls and boys from violence, exploitation and harmful practices, a key lesson is the importance of strengthening child protection, social protection, education and health systems in an integrated way. The 2016 QCPR emphasizes the use of such integrated approaches as well as the importance of promoting gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls as key to sustainable development.

14. The evaluation on the Review of development effectiveness in UNICEF, 2012-2015, recognizes that country programmes should be strengthened to adequately address gender equality, including through systematic application of gender analysis during programme design and delivery. The review further observes that strengthening results monitoring, reporting and management requires a range of measures, including capacity development for UNICEF staff and for implementing partners, as well as the strengthening of monitoring systems.

15. Furthermore, UNICEF should continue to strengthen its partnerships with Governments and within the United Nations development system, with a view to accelerating implementation of the 2030 Agenda. UNICEF also needs to continue to build on its strong and diverse country programmes of cooperation, network of National Committees, and growing partnerships with the private sector and civil society to accelerate the realization of the rights of all children.

[1] This section is based on the findings of various recent evaluations; the MOPAN 2015-16 Assessments: United Nations Children's Fund, Institutional Assessment Report; and the paper 2016 midterm review of the Strategic Plan, 2014-2017: Lessons learned.

C. Guiding principles of the Strategic Plan

16. The Strategic Plan is grounded in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which provides the foundation for everything UNICEF does. It is also guided by other international human rights treaties and instruments, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. UNICEF works with partners to respect, protect and promote human rights standards and principles, and fundamental freedoms for all girls and boys, without distinction of any kind whatsoever.

17. The Strategic Plan pursues a vision of realizing the rights of every child and does so by starting with the most deprived, because a focus on equity accelerates progress towards achieving the rights of all children. In this context, the Strategic Plan focuses on operationalizing the call to leave no child behind by emphasizing accelerated action for the most marginalized children, including in humanitarian situations. Through sustained advocacy in all contexts, use of disaggregated data and a renewed focus on at-scale service delivery and systems strengthening, UNICEF will work with others to make sure no child is left behind.

18. UNICEF will strengthen the mainstreaming of gender equality across the organization's work, in line with Gender Action Plan, 2018-2021. The Strategic Plan includes enhancing gender-responsive programming for the achievement of results for girls and boys as well as for strengthening systems and processes.

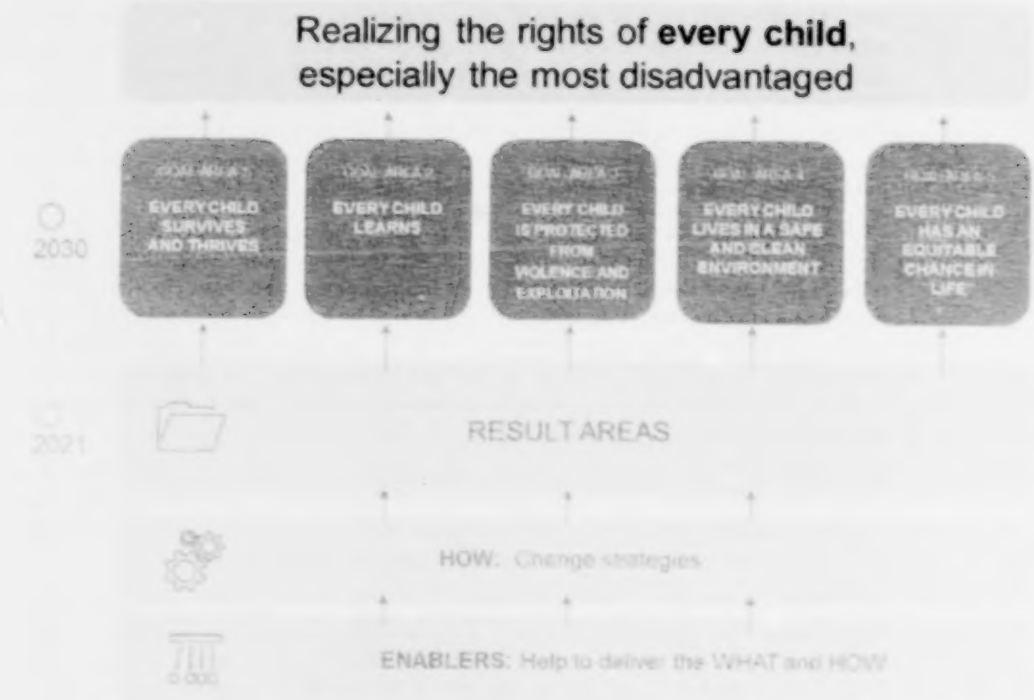
19. With universality as a defining feature, and with a strong anchor in human rights, the Strategic Plan focuses on elements of the 2030 Agenda that bear special relevance for children, namely Sustainable Development Goals 1 to 6, and 16. In addition, UNICEF will work with partners to address the key drivers of inequality, urbanization, climate change, discriminatory practices and the widespread lack of human security (Goals 10, 11, 13 and 17) that undermine the realization of the rights of all children. The Strategic Plan also responds to the outcomes of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development; the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.

20. The Strategic Plan reflects the collaborative advantages of UNICEF and other United Nations entities to pool expertise and reduce duplication in the achievement of results for children. It is also based on the organization's mandate and comparative advantages in relation to United Nations entities in support of the 2030 Agenda. These relate to normative work on child rights, policy advocacy, systems strengthening and service delivery with the goal of leaving no child behind; and maintaining the capacity to scale up humanitarian action while contributing to more resilient and responsive national and local systems.

II. Key elements of the Strategic Plan

21. The Strategic Plan describes the results to be achieved by UNICEF and key partners by 2021 in the context of the 2030 Agenda (the WHAT). It also describes the groups of children who will be reached in diverse contexts (the WHO); the change strategies necessary for the achievement of results (the HOW); and the internal factors that support the change strategies and the achievement of results (the ENABLERS). See the figure below.

Figure: Key elements of the Strategic Plan, 2018-2021


Realizing the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged
2030
EVERY CHILD SURVIVES AND THRIVES
EVERY CHILD LEARNS
EVERY CHILD IS PROTECTED FROM VIOLENCE AND EXPLOITATION
EVERY CHILD LIVES IN A SAFE AND CLEAN ENVIRONMENT
EVERY CHILD HAS AN EQUITABLE CHANCE IN LIFE
2021
RESULT AREAS
HOW: Change strategies
ENABLERS: Help to deliver the WHAT and HOW

Envisaged impact

22. Overall, the Strategic Plan seeks to contribute to the realization of the rights of all children, especially the most disadvantaged. This envisaged impact will be achieved through five Goal Areas:

(a) Every child survives and thrives;

(b) Every child learns;

(c) Every child is protected from violence and exploitation;

(d) Every child lives in a safe and clean environment; and

(e) Every child has an equitable chance in life.

23. The fifth Goal Area on "Every child has an equitable chance in life" underpins and cuts across the four others. The Goal Areas are also underpinned by the cross-cutting priorities of gender equality and humanitarian action. In addition, the Strategic Plan promotes synergies across multiple Goal Areas to address early childhood development, adolescent development, and to support children with disabilities.

24. With a focus on children in all contexts, the Goal Areas are interlinked and are reflective of the integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda. Progress under each Goal Area requires, and contributes to, progress under the others. For example, gender equality in learning and skills development, especially for girls at the secondary level (Goal Area 2), is important for reducing child marriage (Goal Area 3) and for adolescent empowerment (Goal 5).

25. The results framework of the Strategic Plan incorporates the impact, outcome and output indicators necessary for monitoring progress. These have been identified on the basis of the UNICEF mandate and comparative advantage in the 2030 Agenda in relation to United Nations entities. While impact- and outcome-level results reflect the combined efforts of all partners, including United Nations entities, output-level results reflect the organization's specific contribution to the 2030 Agenda.

26. Examples of specific collaboration modalities with United Nations entities are described in the annex to the common chapter.

27. While the Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 builds on its predecessor, it has evolved in several ways. The composite nature of Goal Area 1, which incorporates health, nutrition, early childhood development and HIV/AIDS, reflects the importance of integrated approaches to child survival and development. Goal Area 2 prioritizes learning, placing a stronger emphasis on outcomes in education while retaining due attention to access, especially for the most disadvantaged children. Goal Area 3 seeks to protect children from violence and exploitation. Goal Area 4 focuses on the impact of the environment on children's survival and development. And Goal Area 5 aims to address the key dimensions of inequity that prevent children from realizing their rights.

28. In addition to the Goal Areas, the Strategic Plan includes a learning agenda on some of the key emerging issues facing girls and boys. Adolescent suicide, mental health, road safety and child online safety are examples of areas where UNICEF will work with partners to learn more about what produces brings about results for girls and boys and develop appropriate and scalable models for response.

Goal Areas

29. **Goal Area 1** aims to ensure that every child survives and thrives. It supports the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 2, 3 and 5 in both humanitarian and development contexts; and supports articles 6 and 24 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

30. More than 40 per cent of children under five are at risk of not reaching their physical, cognitive, psychological and/or social and emotional potential due to poverty or poor health and nutrition, including poor care and nurturing practices. The underlying causes include weak delivery systems, unsafe environments and protracted humanitarian crises.

31. Infectious diseases such as pneumonia, diarrhoea and malaria remain the leading causes of death among children under five, with neonatal mortality accounting for a growing proportion of deaths among this age group. Disasters, conflict and epidemics exacerbate this situation due to disruption of access to functioning of essential health services, and increased exposure to health risks for affected populations.

32. Malnutrition is an underlying factor in approximately half of under-five deaths globally, resulting in about 3 million preventable child deaths each year. Malnutrition hinders a child's development, often with lifelong consequences. Currently an estimated 4 million children with severe acute malnutrition are living in countries affected by humanitarian crises.

33. Poor maternal health and care continue to undermine the well-being and rights of women and adolescent girls while also weakening children's chances of surviving and thriving.

34. The HIV epidemic continues to have a disproportionate impact on children. Children under five living with HIV face the highest risk of AIDS-related death. AIDS also remains a leading cause of death among adolescents, with strong gender

dimensions. New HIV infections among adolescents — two thirds of whom are among girls — are projected to rise from 250,000 in 2015 to nearly 400,000 annually by 2030 if progress in reaching adolescents is not sustained.

35. In this context, UNICEF, working with other United Nations entities and other partners, will contribute to the Sustainable Development Goal targets on maternal, neonatal and under-five mortality; HIV and AIDS; and stunting and other forms of malnutrition, while promoting early childhood development and gender-responsive adolescent health and nutrition.

36. UNICEF will support Governments to identify and address bottlenecks to the availability and use of quality health, nutrition, HIV and early childhood services. Actions will include systems strengthening, especially at the subnational and community level to address key illnesses, including diarrhoea, pneumonia, malaria and tuberculosis; enhancing the quality of care; strengthening communication for development; improving procurement and distribution systems and influencing markets; improving gender analysis; and better coordination with the delivery of water and sanitation services (Goal Area 4) and social protection (Goal Area 5). UNICEF will also support the research and development of vaccines and medicines for childhood diseases. No child should be left behind — UNICEF will work ambitiously towards the realization of universal health coverage for all children.

37. UNICEF will also work with other United Nations entities and other partners to strengthen preparedness for public health emergencies.

38. In humanitarian response, UNICEF will support scaled up nutrition assessments and surveillance, management of severe acute malnutrition and infant and young child feeding support; as well as scaled up life-saving interventions through population- and community-based services. UNICEF will also support scaled up efforts that integrate GBV prevention and risk mitigation in nutrition and health programmes. UNICEF will support and advocate with partners for measures in line with international humanitarian law to ensure that children and their families are not denied access to food and essential health-care services, and to prevent the destruction or damage of critical civilian infrastructure such as hospitals.

39. **Goal Area 2** aims to ensure that every child learns. Education is a right enshrined in articles 28 and 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It is also a driver of equity, poverty reduction, empowerment, peaceful and inclusive societies and economic growth. Educating girls is particularly transformative: evidence shows schooling for girls, especially at the secondary level, opens lifelong opportunities for them. Goal Area 2 therefore supports the achievement of multiple Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goals 4 and 5, in both humanitarian and development contexts.

40. Globally, more than half of preschool-aged children, 61 million primary-school-aged children and 60 million lower-secondary-school-aged adolescents and 142 million upper secondary school-aged adolescents lack access to learning opportunities. This includes children living in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, who account for more than half of out-of-school children.

41. Despite progress, girls are still more likely to be out of primary school than boys. Moreover, in countries affected by conflict, girls are 2.5 times more likely to be out of school than boys. Progress towards education for all is limited in part due to the exclusion of the poorest and other vulnerable groups, including children with disabilities and children belonging to minorities.

42. By itself, however, access to education is not enough to guarantee that a child learns. Globally, an estimated 250 million children in primary school are not learning the basics of reading and mathematics. There are also large learning gaps within and

between countries. Weak education system capacity and protracted crises are common underlying causes among countries that have been unable to meet children's learning needs.

43. Working with partners, UNICEF will emphasize strengthening education systems to ensure that schooling translates into learning outcomes, especially for the most marginalized children, and that systems are backed by resources to respond to the risk of disaster, conflict and other shocks. UNICEF will seek to increase opportunities for the most marginalized boys and girls, from early learning to upper secondary, including supporting the provision of non-formal and accelerated learning for those children already left behind.

44. UNICEF will also focus on improving systems that develop the skills of girls and boys throughout childhood, including adolescence, to promote equitable learning, personal empowerment, active citizenship, non-violence, gender equality and employability, both in and out of schools. No child should be left behind. More needs to be done for girls, in particular to improve safety and eliminate sexual- and gender-based violence and abuse.

45. In humanitarian situations, UNICEF will work to ensure continued access to learning programmes for affected children. In addition to supporting the provision of safe and secure learning environments, UNICEF will support life skills development for children and youth, including psychosocial support. UNICEF will also advocate and engage with relevant partners for measures in line with international humanitarian law to ensure the protection of children and educators as well as prevent the destruction or damage of schools.

46. **Goal Area 3** seeks to ensure that every girl and boy is protected from violence and exploitation, in both humanitarian and development contexts. This includes all forms of violence, including gender-based violence (GBV), sexual exploitation and abuse. The duty to protect children from violence and exploitation is enshrined in numerous articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including articles 19, and 34 to 38. Goal Area 3 supports the achievement of multiple Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goals 5, 8 and 16.

47. Global estimates point to hundreds of millions of girls and boys experiencing some form of violence, exploitation, or harmful practice. One in 10 girls under the age of 20 has experienced forced intercourse, rape, or other sexual acts. Boys are also at risk of sexual violence. Almost 750 million girls and women were married as children, and at least 200 million girls and women have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting. Hundreds of thousands of refugee and migrant children are at grave risk of violence, exploitation and abuse, including trafficking and smuggling. In addition, at least 2.7 million children, many of them children with disabilities, live in residential care.

48. In emergencies, additional child protection interventions are necessary to address heightened vulnerabilities due to the protection risks that humanitarian crises exacerbate and the new protection risks that emerge. This is particularly the case for displaced children; children who are unaccompanied, separated or orphaned; children and women at risk of, or directly affected by GBV; children living in areas affected by armed conflict; children with disabilities; and children belonging to minorities.

49. Gender-based violence is one of the most pervasive violations of human rights across the world. Conflict situations, disasters and displacement can intensify the various forms of GBV that girls and women are subjected to even in times of peace. Limited availability of formal protection and justice systems and separation of families and communities combine to increase the risk of GBV and diminish possibilities for treatment, healing and recovery. The increasing scale of people

affected by humanitarian crises requires UNICEF to step up its response to GBV in emergencies.

50. Working with other United Nations entities and partners, UNICEF will seek to protect children from violence and exploitation, focusing on reducing violence, eliminating harmful practices against girls, reducing exploitation and enhancing children's access to justice.

51. UNICEF will focus on the specific protection needs of girls and boys and their best interests, and on strengthening the protective environment through critical investments in national systems, community dialogue and behaviour change. In particular, UNICEF will support Governments to strengthen and expand their social services infrastructure and case management systems, and will work with communities to increase their capacity to protect children.

52. Building on the principle of state accountability, UNICEF will support capacity development programmes for justice and administrative bodies as well as civil registration systems. The objective is to make sure that child victims, witnesses or perpetrators seeking to access justice, and/or participating in criminal, civil and administrative justice processes, are treated in accordance with international standards. UNICEF will also advocate for policy and legislative changes, and will support capacity development of national human rights institutions to facilitate access to child-friendly remedies.

53. In humanitarian situations, UNICEF will support community-based approaches to the provision of psychosocial support to girls, boys and women experiencing GBV, including by providing safe spaces. UNICEF will also work to prevent family separation and support reunification of unaccompanied and separated children, strive to prevent child recruitment, support the release and reintegration of girls and boys associated with armed forces and groups, and continue to support programmes for prevention and provision of survivor assistance to children affected by landmines and explosive arms. UNICEF will seek gender-responsive protection for children exposed to grave violations in situations of armed conflict, and scale up support services to survivors. Approaches to results-based management will integrate analysis of risks to children and women related to disaster, conflict, climate change and other shocks, and strengthen coherence and complementarity between development and humanitarian programming. Streamlining of business processes with other United Nations entities will continue.

54. UNICEF will continue to advocate with all parties to a conflict to comply with international humanitarian law and human rights standards and support the monitoring and provision of timely and appropriate advocacy and programme responses to, child rights violations.

55. **Goal Area 4** prioritizes a safe and clean environment for children, a right enshrined in article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. This Goal Area contributes to Sustainable Development Goals 6, 11, 13 and 16.

56. Access to safe water, improved sanitation and proper hygiene is vital to the well-being of girls and boys. It contributes to good health and nutrition (Goal Area 1), quality learning (Goal Area 2), and dignity, especially for women and girls.

57. There have been significant advances in expanding access to improved water and sanitation in recent decades. However, an estimated 2.4 billion people still lack access to improved sanitation and 663 million people lack access to improved drinking water sources. Half a billion women and girls do not have access to adequate menstrual hygiene management. In humanitarian situations, access to safe water and sanitation is often interrupted and eroded, including as a strategy of war or a consequence of hostilities.

58. Millions of children around the world are also affected by conflict and fragility, climate change, natural hazards and air pollution. A safe and clean environment for children is more important than ever.

59. Today, more than half of the world's children live in cities, including many in urban slums. It is imperative that city planning is responsive to the rights of women, girls and boys.

60. Some 28 per cent of the world's children live in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, a figure projected to increase to one third by 2030. Climate change and natural disasters also pose grave risks to children and their caregivers, most of whom are women: more than half a billion children live in areas with an extremely high flood risk, and nearly 160 million children live in high, or extremely high, drought severity zones.

61. To address the challenges related to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), UNICEF will continue to work with partners to strengthen national systems, with particular attention to gender considerations. UNICEF will also support initiatives for WASH in schools and health centres, taking into account the specific needs of women, girls and children living with disabilities. UNICEF will support efforts to scale-up programmes and services that improve menstrual hygiene management for adolescent girls. Complementary efforts will focus on community platforms to address behavioural and social barriers.

62. In humanitarian situations, UNICEF will provide life-saving access to safe water and will support gender-responsive hygiene and sanitation. Within its mandate, UNICEF will also support and advocate with partners for measures that prevent denial of access to water and sanitation services to children and their families as well as their destruction or damage.

63. UNICEF will work with United Nations entities to support countries to develop or strengthen policies and programmes related to climate change, disaster risk reduction and peacebuilding so they are responsive to the needs of women and children, and will strengthen the coherence and complementarity between humanitarian and development programming by supporting systems to better prepare for, respond to and recover from shocks and stresses.

64. In cities, UNICEF will support the expansion of essential services to the poorest urban communities; work with local authorities to make city planning child-responsive; and strengthen the evidence base on equity gaps among children.

65. **Goal Area 5** underpins other Goal Areas by addressing some of the key dimensions of inequity that prevent children from realizing their rights. It supports the achievement of several Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goals 1, 5 and 10; and supports numerous articles such as 2, 23, 26 and 30 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

66. Much of the deprivation experienced by the most disadvantaged children is as a result of living in poverty, their being girls or young women, children with disabilities, or children belonging to minorities.

67. Poverty has lifelong consequences for children. Children are two times more likely than adults to be living in poverty, and a child living in poverty is also more likely to grow into an adult living in poverty. Gender inequality perpetuates poverty.

68. Through collaboration with other United Nations entities and other partners, UNICEF will support Governments to routinely measure and report on multidimensional child poverty. It will also support the adoption of national plans and budgets to address child poverty. UNICEF will continue working to expand cash transfers, especially to mothers, for the benefit of the most disadvantaged children,

and to strengthen national social protection systems, including preparedness for scaled up responses in the event of humanitarian crises.

69. The organization's priorities for Goal Area 5 also include addressing inequitable roles and practices among girls and boys; enhancing support for children with disabilities; reducing multidimensional child poverty; strengthening social protection for children and promoting adolescent empowerment.

70. To promote gender equality, UNICEF will seek to address discriminatory policies as well as the socialization processes and narratives that define gendered roles and practices, supporting girls and boys from early childhood through adolescence to adopt and shape more equitable gender norms and behaviours. Initiatives will include parenting and early childhood programmes, community engagement, adolescent participation and engagement; gender-responsive training for frontline workers, including as part of preparedness for humanitarian response; and support for legal and policy change.

71. Children with disabilities are among the most marginalized of all children. They are less likely to attend school, access medical services, or have their voices heard. In humanitarian situations, children with disabilities face increased risk of violence, and they are often excluded from receiving humanitarian assistance.

72. UNICEF will continue supporting countries in addressing the many barriers that impede results for girls and boys with disabilities, with the aim of providing inclusive services. Furthermore, UNICEF will continue to invest in the generation and use of data on children with disabilities.

73. Adolescence is a crucial developmental period that profoundly influences the life trajectories of girls and boys in dramatically different ways. While adolescents have the potential to become powerful agents of positive change, too often their specific needs are not prioritized.

74. To promote their empowerment, UNICEF will support national policies and service delivery systems that are responsive to the needs of adolescent girls and boys. It will promote platforms for the systematic participation of adolescents in decisions that affect their lives, and will support programmes that nurture them as informed social actors and enhance their civic engagement.

75. UNICEF will continue to promote the rights of children belonging to minorities to equal access to social services and to a life free from discrimination. Actions will include the use of data and evidence to highlight issues affecting minority children; support for the implementation of recommendations made by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; and strengthening of systems for monitoring child rights.

76. In humanitarian situations, UNICEF will support cash transfer programmes to help families to gain access to goods and services in a dignified manner, and to strengthen national social protection systems. UNICEF will also focus on addressing exclusion through support for a gender-responsive front-line response and providing a combination of services that are disability inclusive. Support will be provided to country offices and partners to strengthen data on programme performance, community engagement and accountability mechanisms.

77. UNICEF is committed to making sure that the rights of all children are fulfilled, everywhere. The success of the Strategic Plan will be assessed by whether the children who are the most left behind benefit from the results achieved. Details of the groups of children who will be reached in diverse contexts are outlined in the results framework of the Strategic Plan.

III. Cross-cutting priorities

Humanitarian action

78. Principled humanitarian action and delivery against the UNCEF Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action are essential parts of the UNICEF mandate. Protecting children in humanitarian situations while addressing their needs and vulnerabilities is essential to ensuring progress towards the 2030 Agenda. It also has a greater impact where it enhances humanitarian investments that contribute to longer-term development outcomes and accelerates resilient development.

79. In accordance with its mandate, the focus of UNICEF will be the delivery of faster, more effective and at-scale humanitarian response in line with the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, including adaptations for an effective response to health emergencies and during mass population displacements and protracted crises. This will include a renewed emphasis on increasing the reach and quality of humanitarian assistance; on recognizing the profoundly different and gendered impacts that crises have on women and men, girls and boys; and on ensuring the centrality of protection, with particular attention to grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict.

80. System strengthening efforts will include support to national coordination, effective strategies and capacities for rapid scale-up of life-saving and protection services in humanitarian situations. The humanitarian response will more systematically include community engagement and accountability to affected people and communities, including through communication for development and platforms for adolescent participation. The UNICEF response will, wherever possible, engage and support national and local first responders.

81. UNICEF will further strengthen its humanitarian action through enhanced risk-informed programming, including investments in key preparedness actions, national and subnational risk assessments, and advocacy for risk reduction strategies in development plans and sector policies to contribute to social cohesion and peaceful societies. The UNICEF response will support coordinated needs assessments and inter-agency humanitarian response strategies and planning, including through cluster coordination mechanisms. It will strengthen coherence and complementarity between humanitarian and development programming not only to better respond to immediate needs, but also contribute to collective outcomes with the aim of reducing needs, vulnerabilities and risks over multiple years.

82. UNICEF business processes will support more coherent results-based management across development and humanitarian programming, and greater transparency and application of the International Aid Transparency Initiative standards to humanitarian reporting as well as harmonized and streamlined processes with implementing partners.

83. UNICEF will also work with other United Nations entities and other partners to support more agile data-collection methods and systems and joint analyses appropriate to fragile and humanitarian situations.

84. An illustrative summary of Strategic Plan humanitarian targets is annexed to the results framework.

Gender equality

85. The organizational focus on equity recognizes the criticality of equality between girls and boys, and the intimate link between the welfare and rights of women and that

of children; a tremendous evidence base shows that the well-being of children is most often predicated on women's survival, protection and opportunity.

86. Important progress has been made in promoting gender equality worldwide, yet much remains to be done. In many countries, girls continue to be less valued than boys and have fewer opportunities to survive and thrive.

87. Fragile, conflict-affected and disaster-prone contexts may further exacerbate gender inequality and the disproportionate burden and responsibilities women face in supporting and protecting children.

88. Building on the Gender Action Plan, 2014-2017, as well as system-wide efforts to promote gender equality, gender results are integrated into each of the five Goal Areas of the Strategic Plan. These results include quality maternal care; menstrual hygiene management; nutrition for women and girls; equitable learning and skills for girls and boys; reducing child marriage; and transforming gender discriminatory roles and practices. In addition to gender-equitable outcomes, the Strategic Plan places strong emphasis on addressing some of the key barriers to the empowerment of adolescent girls. Engaging men and boys as a part of the change is critical for addressing the root causes of gender-based discrimination and transforming social norms.

89. There is a strong focus on mainstreaming gender analysis in programme design and delivery, strengthening the collection and utilization of disaggregated data, forging partnerships, building capacity, achieving gender parity in staffing, and effectively using resources. Gender equality results and strategies are further elaborated in the Gender Action Plan, 2018-2021. UNICEF and the other United Nations entities have also proposed common indicators for coordinated action in support of gender equality.

IV. Change strategies

90. This Strategic Plan outlines the change strategies (the HOW) for the achievement of results under the five Goal Areas. With human rights principles and standards at the core of its activities, UNICEF delivers change by combining high-quality programmes at scale, harnessing innovation and collecting evidence, in partnership with Governments, other United Nations partners, civil society, the private sector, communities and children. It uses these to leverage wider change nationally and globally through advocacy, communications and campaigning. UNICEF also builds public support around the world to volunteer, advocate and mobilize resources for the cause of children, and works with partners to achieve an even greater impact. The key change strategies UNICEF will focus on during 2018-2021 include:

91. **Programming for at-scale results for children**. UNICEF will foster cross-sectoral and multisectoral programming that provides a holistic and rights-based response to children and to the environment in which they live. UNICEF will support policy, capacity development and systems strengthening at national and subnational levels to improve the delivery of essential services to the most disadvantaged children, including coordination and rapid scale up of life-saving and protection services in humanitarian situations, and strengthening social protection systems to be ready to scale up cash transfers in emergencies. On the basis of evidence, UNICEF will also focus on scaling up programming to support behaviour change and community engagement, including in humanitarian situations. UNICEF will enhance coherence and connectedness between at-scale capacity for humanitarian action and longer-term programming, including support to common needs assessment and analysis of risks related to disaster, conflict, climate change and other shocks, and corresponding risk-informed programming with partners. These complementary approaches will support

the coherence between humanitarian and development programming. Promoting cooperation, sharing lessons learned and fostering innovation and partnerships through South-South and triangular cooperation will also be emphasized.

92. **Gender-responsive programming** in all contexts. In order to foster high quality, gender-responsive programme design, implementation and monitoring, UNICEF will continue improvement and standardization of tools, technical assistance, capacity-building and guidance for country offices to undertake a robust gender analysis and to prioritize evidence-based, effective change strategies that are most suited to the organization's comparative advantage. These strategies are further elaborated in the Gender Action Plan, 2018-2021.

93. **Winning support for the cause of children from decision makers and the wider public**. UNICEF will become an even stronger advocacy, campaigning, fundraising and communications force for children, working with others to build alliances and movements for change. Through this public engagement, the organization will make progress towards recruiting 100 million supporters to the cause of children, to volunteer, advocate and give. This strategy also includes strengthening the UNICEF brand, and supporting young people and children as agents of change.

94. **Developing and leveraging resources and partnerships for children**. UNICEF will advocate for domestic financing and budgeting for programmes that benefit children. It will also maintain a strong focus on mobilizing resources from Governments and the private sector — including individuals, foundations and corporations — to maximize longer-term, flexible and predictable funds in support of UNICEF programmes and advocacy for children, including for preparedness and humanitarian action. The rationale for an increased focus on resource mobilization is a reflection of the ambition of the 2030 Agenda, growing demand from host Governments to collaborate on interventions at scale that can deliver the transformative change envisioned in the Sustainable Development Goals, and the need to respond to the continued frequency and complexity of humanitarian crises.

95. In support of the 2030 Agenda, UNICEF will continue to strengthen partnerships with Governments for at-scale results for girls and boys. Collaboration with civil society partners will be increased, including continued engagement with non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, foundations and academic institutions, to advocate and act on behalf of children. Strategic and operational partnerships will be enhanced with international financial institutions, including the World Bank and the regional development banks. UNICEF will also expand its collaboration with the business community to leverage their core assets on behalf of children.

96. There has been strong growth in revenue over 2014-2017 period with actual revenue 21 per cent higher than the amount planned during the mid-term review. An in-depth analysis of global public and private sector resource mobilization trends has identified areas for additional growth, particularly through an increase in the recruitment and retention of monthly pledge donors and enhanced focus on legacy, corporate and foundation fundraising opportunities. This will be underpinned by the ability of UNICEF to demonstrate results and value for money. Total income for 2018-2021 is projected to be $22.8 billion, out of which $16.5 billion will be other resources, and $6.3 billion will be regular resources, which are projected to increase at a faster pace, driven mainly by increases from the private sector. Resources will be directed to the areas of greatest need, making sure that no child is left behind. The integrated resource plan and integrated results and resources framework that support the Strategic Plan are presented in tables 1 and 2 that follow.

97. **Harnessing the power of business and markets for children**. At both global and country levels, UNICEF will continue to leverage the power of private sector

partners to improve the lives of children around the world, harnessing their core business and innovation, and advocating for them to uphold child rights. UNICEF will continue to influence global and local markets for children, including pursuing a research and development pipeline of vaccines, medicines and technologies for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal targets. This will require attention to reducing market barriers that inhibit access to essential supplies for children.

98. **United Nations working together**. In alignment with the 2016 QCPR, UNICEF will work with other United Nations entities to strengthen system coherence and to introduce more integrated approaches with a view to achieving better results for children and the 2030 Agenda. Efforts will focus on: promoting UNDAFs that are more strategic, anchored in human rights standards and principles, aligned with national priorities, and based on common needs assessments and common analysis; enhancing the quality and depth of engagement in country-level results groups; leading or co-leading groups within relevant areas of strategic focus and comparative advantage; and implementing the standard operating procedures for Delivering as One.

99. UNICEF will also collaborate with United Nations development system partners to develop system-wide actions for cross-cutting issues such as the reduction of poverty and inequality; gender equality and empowerment of women and girls; adolescent and maternal health and HIV; coherence and complementarity between humanitarian and development programming; climate change; and disaggregated data for sustainable development. Common indicators will help to track actions by the four entities in support of these six areas. UNICEF will rely on strong partnerships with members of the United Nations family and others to achieve lasting results for children in these areas and others highlighted in the results framework. Key United Nations partners are listed against each Goal Area in the results framework.

100. The common indicators will also be pursued at the country level through UNDAFs or related instruments, including humanitarian response plans.

101. In humanitarian situations, UNICEF will continue its support to humanitarian country teams to deliver results for children and their families. UNICEF will continue to invest in its role as cluster lead agency for nutrition, WASH, and co-lead for education and for the child protection area of responsibility, as well as host of the secretariat for the communication and community engagement initiative. UNICEF will also continue to strengthen partnerships with national and first responders as well as support their engagement in cluster coordination mechanisms.

102. In addition to its collaborative work with UNDP, UNFPA and UN-Women to achieve results under the Strategic Plan, UNICEF will rely on strong partnerships with other members of the United Nations family, including: the Department of Economic and Social Affairs; the Department of Peacekeeping Operations; the Department of Political Affairs; the International Labour Organization; the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS; the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict; the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict; the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children; the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; the World Food Programme; and the World Health Organization.

103. **Fostering innovation for children**. This will include enhancing the use of technologies to better engage communities and enhance social accountability, including in humanitarian action. This change strategy will also involve identifying the most promising programme innovations for different contexts while supporting partners to adopt, adapt and scale up the most successful approaches.

104. **Harnessing the power of evidence as a driver of change for children.** Evaluations, research and data are key elements of sound programming, advocacy and leveraging partnerships for children. Identifying the most marginalized groups is a prerequisite for leaving no child behind. There will be a strong focus on research, policy analysis and evaluation of what works for children, and an emphasis on the collection, analysis and utilization of data, including in fragile situations. UNICEF will work with partners to fill data gaps as well as increase availability of disaggregated data on the 37 child-focused Sustainable Development Goal indicators.

V. Operational effectiveness and efficiency

105. The Strategic Plan sets out measures to improve the internal effectiveness and efficiency of UNICEF (the ENABLERS). The enablers support the delivery of results and change strategies and comprise four interconnected elements:

(a) internal governance;

(b) management;

(c) staff capacity; and

(d) knowledge and information systems.

106. **Enhancing internal governance in support of the universal mandate of UNICEF.** In support of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the 2030 Agenda, the UNICEF business model is to partner with the public and private sectors, United Nations entities, civil society organizations and citizens to support the fulfilment of the rights of children, everywhere, especially the most-disadvantaged, including in humanitarian situations. UNICEF will continue to be guided by the Executive Board on the most appropriate type of engagement in a given context. UNICEF will continue to invest the majority of its resources in least developed countries while working in other contexts in support of national priorities and in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The trend shows that support for service-delivery is largely centred in the least developed countries as well as countries in humanitarian situations. Yet, even in such contexts UNICEF continues to engage in at-scale systems strengthening, policy development and normative work, thereby providing a full range of support. In middle-income countries, at-scale systems strengthening, policy development and normative work, backed by modelling of programmes that work for children dominate the work of UNICEF. In high-income countries, UNICEF will continue to be guided by Executive Board decision 2016/11 on the most appropriate type of engagement.

107. UNICEF will manage emerging risks to programmes and operations through an updated enterprise risk management (ERM) framework that enables managers to use a single, comprehensive methodology. An updated ERM policy will be implemented in 2018 to support well-managed risk-taking and mitigating strategies.

108. Risks will also be managed by the organization being even more transparent. UNICEF will build on its current solid ranking in the Aid Transparency Index by providing more frequent data on results and resources, including application of transparency standards to humanitarian reporting.

109. Furthermore, UNICEF will introduce an anti-fraud strategy articulating measures to strengthen deterrence, prevention and detection of fraud, including risks related to implementing partners and contractors. It will also identify an enhanced pathway for remedial action and recovery of losses.

110. Further efforts will be made to mainstream value-for-money considerations related to programmes and management, including from the inception of programme development to implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

111. **Oversight functions** will receive increased attention. A strengthened internal audit function will bolster the adequacy and effectiveness of the system of internal controls and its recommendations will strengthen the organization's risk management. The evaluation function will continue to support the organization's work across all areas. The Evaluation Policy will be revised following an external peer review in 2017, and will focus on improving the quality and use of evaluations, especially at the country level. UNICEF will achieve the target of a minimum of 1 per cent of programme expenditures devoted to evaluations within the Strategic Plan period.

112. UNICEF is committed to making its offices accessible and inclusive for all, and is also working to improve the eco-efficiency of its operations, including in humanitarian settings.

113. **Enhancing management efficiency and effectiveness**: Building on previous work, UNICEF will continue to enhance the skills of staff and partners in results-based management, including the design and delivery of country programmes. Programme monitoring and reporting will be reinforced through new tools and near-real-time learning. Implementation of recently introduced guidance to country offices on the development of programme strategies and theories of change will be sustained. UNICEF will also strengthen results-based budgeting through the adoption of a new budget formulation tool.

114. UNICEF will strengthen its Global Shared Services Centre for the enhanced delivery of efficient services. Through vertical integration and economies of scale, UNICEF will achieve cost savings and further reduce processing time for country offices.

115. With other United Nations entities, UNICEF will pursue horizontal integration through a business operations strategy that aims to simplify and harmonize business processes and consolidate administrative support services. Particular emphasis will be placed on enhanced quality of services, collaborative procurement and common premises.

116. **Strengthening staff capacity**: Flexible approaches to the deployment of staff will be pursued. A versatile and mobile staff, supported by advances in information and communications technology (ICT), will expand the reach of UNICEF actions. This will include adopting non-traditional operating modalities, such as assigning staff to work remotely, or in regional hubs. These will also further enhance gender equality in the workplace.

117. UNICEF will continue to support staff at all levels through processes and systems aimed at: (a) ensuring the right people are in the right place at the right time; (b) providing clarity on what is expected of staff, and ensuring they are equipped to deliver on those expectations; (c) fostering a culture of continuous learning as well as professional and personal growth; (d) strengthening skills for strategic engagement with new partnerships, including foundations, development banks and the private sector; and (e) maintaining staff motivation and engagement, and an environment that allows everyone to contribute to their full potential.

118. Given the need for increasingly flexible options for deployment, staff must be able to meet new challenges wherever they occur, with a wide range of technical capabilities, core skills and knowledge.

119. UNICEF will continue to evaluate the performance of each individual, the organization will also increasingly focus on assessing and recognizing office-level contributions to results.

120. In line with the QCPR, UNICEF will continue its efforts to achieve gender and geographic balance in appointments at all levels, with due regard to female candidates and nationals from programme countries. UNICEF will also enhance its overall capacity, expertise and learning on mainstreaming gender equality. Capacity-building programmes on gender-responsive programming will be rolled out to UNICEF staff and partners in both development and humanitarian contexts.

121. Enhancing knowledge and information systems for programme results and organizational efficiency and effectiveness: As UNICEF strengthens its position as a knowledge leader and advocate for children, it will require continued investment in knowledge-sharing and information management. This includes building digital engagement and fundraising platforms and leveraging social media to catalyse millions of volunteers for the cause of children.

122. To facilitate knowledge transfer and exchange, UNICEF will provide staff with the tools needed to support interactions and active collaboration with other United Nations system staff, partners and others, and will work to improve knowledge resources.

123. Governance of ICT will continue to be strengthened. Inefficiencies will be reduced by introducing new digital platforms, data sources and analytics that are integrated with existing systems. An overarching goal will be to provide connectivity and access to information and systems to all staff, regardless of their location or specific role.

124. In so doing, it will be critical to adhere to transparency principles and to deliver open source solutions to the greatest extent possible. This will entail increasing awareness around information and cybersecurity, and ensuring a solid enterprise architecture of core information systems that can harbour safe data for UNICEF as well as its partners and beneficiaries, while ensuring institutional resilience and business continuity. The UNICEF response in emergencies will also expand from providing core telecommunications and Internet access to including information management and use of geospatial technologies.

VI. Risk management

125. In a changing world, an effective risk management framework that identifies and mitigates risk, while firmly oriented towards enabling the organization to deliver, is critical. UNICEF has identified several risks that have the potential to limit the full roll out of the Strategic Plan. These include: insufficient resources to implement an ambitious agenda towards achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals; increasing scale of recurring and new humanitarian crises; in many contexts, inadequate capacity of national partners for at-scale implementation of programmes; inadequate monitoring capacity, particularly in sudden and complex emergencies; uneven focus on results for children among United Nations partners working together; challenges with systems and procedures for United Nations partners working together; and challenges in results-based budgeting as part of the broader management for results agenda of UNICEF.

126. The change strategies and enablers discussed above are explicitly designed to help to mitigate these risks. Flexible funding will allow UNICEF and partners to leverage and commit resources where they are most needed. New resource partnerships, particularly through harnessing the power of business and markets, will

be key in this regard, and will also enable UNICEF to help to mitigate the risk of insufficient resources. Limited implementation and monitoring capacity among some partners can be overcome with an expanded agenda on systems strengthening by United Nations entities and key partners as well as with continued investment in systems to gather, analyse and disseminate evidence on what works for children. Stronger community engagement enabled by innovative technologies will further expand the capacity to implement and monitor programmes.

127. A mobile, versatile workforce, enabled by agile deployment arrangements, will also help to strengthen implementation capacity where it is most needed, including in sudden-onset emergencies, and flexibility in business operations will increase interoperability with key United Nations partners. Robust ICT systems will be essential to achieving this flexibility and to keeping pace with the risks and opportunities posed by rapidly evolving technology. They will also be vital for strong results-based management systems that ensure proper alignment of resources and results. The integrated results and resources framework and new budget formulation tool will also be key, as will the planned guidance on value for money. A more detailed discussion of the risks and mitigating strategies is described in a separate paper on the Theory of Change for the Strategic Plan.

VII. Monitoring and evaluation

128. The results framework will outline impact- and outcome-level indicators of the Strategic Plan, largely derived from the Sustainable Development Goals. Baselines, annual milestones and end-of-cycle targets for output indicators will help to track the UNICEF contribution to the Goals. Monitoring information from all levels of the organization will be made available to the public through the UNICEF Transparency Portal <http://open.unicef.org>. The annual report of the Executive Director to the Executive Board will continue to serve as the vehicle for reporting on progress towards the Strategic Plan, including the indicators listed by United Nations entities in the annex to the common chapter. The mid-term review of the Strategic Plan will provide opportunities for reflection and adjustment.

129. For purposes of monitoring the Strategic Plan, UNICEF will continue to strengthen its data and information systems, including expanding use of the organizational performance monitoring system (inSight) and the effective tracking of gender equality and humanitarian results. Improved knowledge-sharing platforms will facilitate the exchange of good practices across the organization and with United Nations partners and others. Internal guidance and the recently developed results-based management learning package will facilitate translation of the 2018-2021 Strategic Plan and Gender Action Plan into sector strategies and country programmes. Key results for the most deprived children will be tracked and reported with global partners through development of national monitoring systems in as a part of country programmes. All of these systems will help to strengthen the coherence and complementarity of development and humanitarian programmes.

130. UNICEF will also focus on enhancing the capacity of key systems at the country level, including information management and accountability systems, to provide more timely and better quality information for decision makers. In line with the QCPR, UNICEF will enhance evaluation capacity at country level and support the articulation of gender results through the UNCT scorecard. On the basis of broad consultations, UNICEF will design and implement a new plan for independent corporate evaluations, and will give increased attention to the sharing and uptake of evaluation evidence.

VIII. Conclusion

131. The world is changing faster than ever before, and so too are the threats, challenges and opportunities facing its children. Yet children's rights remain the same — immutable, indivisible, interrelated and universal. To meet these challenges and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, and using the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other human rights standards and principles as guiding tools, UNICEF, as well as its many partners, must be sufficiently nimble and adaptable to respond to these changing dynamics while remaining steadfast in its core mandate to promote the fulfilment of children's rights. The Goal Areas, change strategies and enablers outlined in this Strategic Plan position UNICEF to meet this challenge and to deliver lasting results for children, bringing the organization closer to realizing the vision of the 2030 Agenda, a world in which no child is left behind.

IX. Draft decision

The Executive Board

1. *Approves* the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 (E/ICEF/2017/17/Rev.1 and E/ICEF/2017/18).

Annex

Table 1 — Integrated resource plan, 2018-2021

	Approved 2014-2017 Midterm Review (E/ICEF/2016/AB/L.2/Rev.1)							*2018-2021*						
	Regular resources		*Other resources*		*Total resources*		*Trust funds*	*Regular resources*		*Other resources*		*Total resources*		*Trust funds*
			Programme	*Cost recovery*						*Programme*	*Cost recovery*			
	$m	*%*	*$m*	*$m*	*$m*	*%*	*$m*	*$m*	*%*	*$m*	*$m*	*$m*	*%*	*$m*
1. Resources available														
Opening balance	575.3		1 853.1	–	2 428.4		586.0	562.3		1 235.9	–	1 798.2		727.0
Income														
Contributions	4 697.7		13 685.7	–	18 383.4		–	5 801.9		16 512.5	–	22 314.4		–
Other income and reimbursements	402.5		–	–	402.5		–	500.0		–	–	500.0		–
Total income	5 100.2		13 685.7	–	18 785.9		–	6 301.9		16 512.5	–	22 814.4		–
Tax reimbursement adjustment	(76.6)		–	–	(76.6)		–	(80.0)		–	–	(80.0)		–
Trust fund receipts			–	–	–		7 577.0			–	–	–		7 148.0
Total available	**5 598.9**		**15 538.8**	**–**	**21 137.7**		**8 163.0**	**6 784.1**		**17 748.4**	**–**	**24 532.6**		**7 875.0**
2. Use of resources														
A. Development														
A.1 Programmes	3 651.8	69.1%	13 429.1	–	17 080.9	86.0%	7 333.0	4 360.0	67.9%	15 917.3	–	20 277.3	84.6%	7 116.0
Country programmes	3 471.8	65.7%	12 900.6	–	16 372.4	82.5%	–	4 140.0	64.5%	15 107.1	–	19 247.1	80.3%	–
Global programme	180.0	3.4%	528.4	–	708.5	3.6%	–	220.0	3.4%	810.2	–	1 030.2	4.3%	–
A.2 Development effectiveness	467.4	8.8%	100.1	–	567.5	2.9%	–	589.0	9.2%	133.0	–	721.9	3.0%	–
Subtotal: Development	4 119.2	78.0%	13 529.2	–	17 648.4	88.9%	7 333.0	4 949.0	77.1%	16 050.3	–	20 999.3	87.6%	7 116.0
B. United Nations development coordination	20.3	0.4%	16.3	–	36.6	0.2%	–	23.3	0.4%	25.9	–	49.3	0.2%	–
C. Management	531.2	10.1%	–	904.2	1 435.4	7.2%		459.9	7.2%	6.4	1 138.0	1 604.3	6.7%	
D. Special purpose														
D.1 Capital investments	20.4	0.4%	–	34.6	55.0	0.3%	–	23.0	0.4%	–	57.0	80.0	0.3%	–

	Approved 2014-2017 Midterm Review (E/ICEF/2016/AB/L.2/Rev.1)							*2018-2021*						
	Regular resources		*Other resources*		*Total resources*		*Trust funds*	*Regular resources*		*Other resources*		*Total resources*		*Trust funds*
			Programme	*Cost recovery*						*Programme*	*Cost recovery*			
	$m	*%*	*$m*	*$m*	*$m*	*%*	*$m*	*$m*	*%*	*$m*	*$m*	*$m*	*%*	*$m*
D.2 Private fundraising and partnerships, direct/investment costs	410.6	7.8%	86.0	–	496.6	2.5%	–	725.1	11.3%	273.0	–	998.2	4.2%	–
D.3 Other	182.5	3.5%	–	–	182.5	0.9%	–	240.0	3.7%	–	–	240.0	1.0%	–
Subtotal: Special purpose	613.4	11.6%	86.0	34.6	734.1	3.7%	–	988.1	15.4%	273.0	57.0	1 318.2	5.5%	–
Total institutional budget (A.2 + B + C+ D.1)	**1 039.3**	**19.7%**	**116.4**	**938.8**	**2 094.5**	**10.5%**	**–**	**1 095.2**	**17.1%**	**165.3**	**1 195.0**	**2 455.5**	**10.2%**	**–**
Integrated budget (A + B + C + D)	**5 284.1**	**100.0%**	**13 631.5**	**938.8**	**19 854.4**	**100.0%**	**7 333.0**	**6 420.3**	**100.0%**	**16 355.6**	**1 195.0**	**23 971.0**	**100.0%**	**7 116.0**
3. Closing balance of resources	**314.7**		**968.5**		**1 283.3**		**830.0**	**363.8**		**197.8**		**561.6**		**759.0**

Table 2 — Integrated results and resources framework, 2018-2021

		2018-2021			
		Regular resources	Other resources		Total resources
			Programme	Cost recovery	
Goals	Functional cluster	$m	$m	$m	$m
Programmes		**4 360.0**	**15 917.3**		**20 277.3**
Goal Area 1 — Every child survives and thrives		1 744.0	6 366.9		8 110.9
Goal Area 2 — Every child learns		872.0	3 183.5		4 055.5
Goal Area 3 — Every child is protected from violence and exploitation		523.2	1 910.1		2 433.3
Goal Area 4 — Every child survives in a safe and clean environment		845.8	3 088.0		3 933.8
Goal Area 5 — Every child has an equitable chance in life		375.0	1 368.9		1 743.9
Organizational effectiveness and efficiency					
1	**Higher quality programmes through results-based management**	**589.0**	**133.0**		**721.9**
	Technical excellence in policy and programmes	500.2	124.2		624.3
	Technical excellence in procurement and management of supplies	53.5	8.8		62.3
	Technical excellence in humanitarian action	35.3			35.3
2	**Improved management of financial and human resources in pursuit of results**	**459.9**	**6.4**	**1 138.0**	**1 604.3**
	Leadership and corporate direction	10.7	1.9	26.5	39.1
	Corporate oversight and assurance	13.8		34.1	47.8
	Corporate financial, information, communications and technology, and administrative management	70.4	.6	174.1	245.1
	Staff and premises security	8.1		20.0	28.1
	Corporate external relations and partnerships, communication and resource mobilization	71.8		177.6	249.4
	Corporate human resources management	27.1	3.8	67.1	98.0
	Field/country office oversight, management and operations support	258.1		638.6	896.7
3	**Coordination of the United Nations Development System**	**23.3**	**25.9**		**49.3**
	United Nations coherence and cluster coordination	23.3	25.9		49.3
4	**Special purpose**	**988.1**	**273.0**	**57.0**	**1 318.2**
	Capital investment	23.0		57.0	80.0
	Private sector fundraising	725.1	273.0		998.2
	Other, including procurement services	240.0			240.0
	Total resources	**6 420.3**	**16 355.6**	**1 195.0**	**23 971.0**